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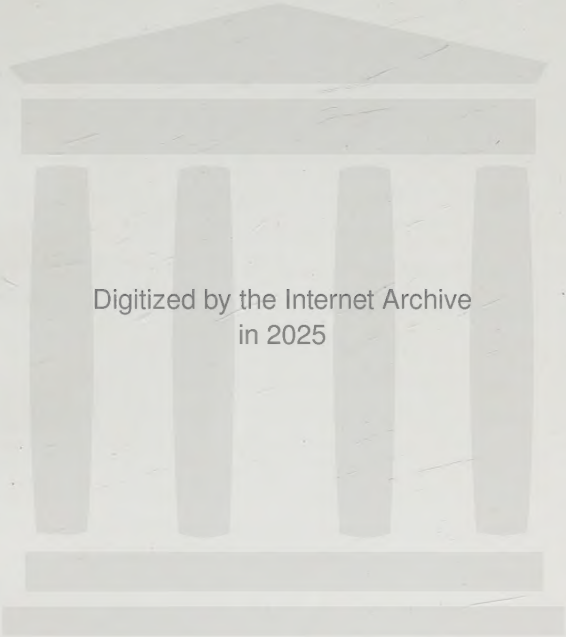
A LEGACY FROM A SCOTTISH MANSE



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Sincerely yours
John A. Ireland

A LEGACY FROM A SCOTTISH MANSE

A SERIES OF PARISH PAPERS

BY THE LATE

REV. JOHN A. IRELAND

MINISTER OF GARTSHERRIE
COATBRIDGE

EDITED
WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
BY J. R.

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TO

HIS FRIEND

W. W.

AND TO

THE MEMORY OF HIS FRIENDS

W. B. AND A. K. M^{c}C.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The Rev. John Alexander Ireland was born in Edinburgh in the year 1846. His father was Mr. John Balfour Ireland, banker there; his grandfather the Rev. Dr. Ireland, a notable minister of the parish of North Leith. He received the rudiments of his education in his native city, and afterwards studied at the University of St. Andrews. It was not in his nature to concentrate upon official courses of study, and it must be owned that, in his college days, he was noted less for scholarship than for his feats upon the golf-links, and amongst the wild fowl of the marshes around Guard Bridge in the small hours of the morning. Yet this precious and formative period he by no means wasted; all the while he read and reflected much, upon lines of his own. The fruit of these independent, if desultory, studies became apparent when, at length, he submitted his discourses to the Presbytery for licence: a celebrated member [1] of the court was so impressed and surprised that he remarked to his neighbour:

[1] Dr. A. K. H. Boyd, the author of *The Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson.*

'Where did that heaven-born sportsman get all these fine thoughts?'

During his probation as a preacher, he served for a time as chaplain of H.M. prison at Greenock, an experience which made a lasting impression upon him. It laid suddenly open before him the depths of depravity to which human nature may sink; and yet it did not shake his invincible faith in the dignity and perfectibility of man: it rather quickened his natural sympathy for the criminal and the outcast, and excited in him a profound distrust of the penal methods of the time.

In 1876 he was ordained minister of the parish of Whitburn. There for fifteen years he may almost be said to have ruled his parish, not only in matters religious, but in all that affected the welfare of the people. Mr. Ireland was ever a dreamer of dreams, and his idealism took practical shape in an advanced policy of sanitary and municipal reform, which he carried through in the face of not a little opposition. His reign as Provost of Whitburn is still green in the memory of the older townspeople, who now readily acknowledge that one was then among them with ideas far in front of his time, and a will that knew not how to yield until they had been put into effect.

An incident of his early ministry in this parish illustrates his masterfulness, as well as his fixed

resolve to have things done 'decently and in order.' The communion-table being, in its naked ugliness, something of an eyesore, he caused it to be covered with a plain crimson cloth. One Sunday, at the close of worship, a zealous Puritan, with a keen scent for Popish innovations, purloined the cloth and bore it off in triumph. His victory, however, was but short-lived; the local constable was close upon his heels with an intimation that, unless the cloth were restored with all speed, his instructions were to prefer a charge of theft. The intimation was sufficient. On another occasion several of the evildoers of the parish sought to get even with him by a nocturnal raid upon his trout ponds. These soon discovered their mistake; they had counted upon the minister's courage, but had greatly underrated his physical prowess. The ringleader was captured, and made to vow amendment under threat of being cast to the fishes!

In 1891 Mr. Ireland was translated to the important industrial charge of Gartsherrie, where he laboured until his death in 1917. There he gave himself wholly to the work of the ministry, and especially to the perfecting of his forms of service for both young and old. Deeming it vital that the young should be early trained to the *worship* of God, he at once instituted a regular service for them every Lord's day, and drew up a special Service Book for

their use. A notable feature of this book is the extent to which the young people are expected to take an audible part in the service. Mr. Ireland always pleaded that the rightness or wrongness of such a practice depends upon whether or not the mind of the child is thereby engaged in the act of worship. Tried by this test, the method was a complete success ; but it is by no means certain that every one could have achieved it so perfectly. Mr. Ireland had a genuine musical talent, and a fine, even fastidious, aesthetic taste—qualities which were of great advantage to him in the ordering and conduct of the services of the church. In these services he contrived to avoid both the Scylla of formality and the Charybdis of ritualism ; they were models of a simple and beautiful worship, and bore in every part the stamp of a refined and spiritual mind. He had a delicate sense of the fitness of things : while fully aware that the distinction between the secular and the sacred is not absolute, he also knew that, in a world where the secular often merges in the profane, the distinction is useful, and even necessary, for the protection of holy things. For example, to one who sought to justify the holding of a secular concert in a church by the plea that religion covers the whole of life, he made the characteristic rejoinder : 'Yes, my friend, but don't you think that it 's rather a primitive state

of society where one dish is used for all household purposes ? '

The pressure of his ministerial duties now prevented him from taking an active part in public affairs. Yet to the end of his life he abated not a whit of his public spirit, nor suffered the wide circle of his interests to contract. Through 'the loopholes of retreat' he kept a vigilant and steady eye upon the signs of the times, and never failed to raise his voice to condemn public follies or abuses, and to point the way to what he believed to be true reform.

Mr. Ireland was in every respect a remarkable man —no less striking in outward appearance than in mental gifts and force of personality. Tall, erect, and athletic, with prominent and mobile, if slightly rugged features, a lofty head and brow, bushy eyebrows above blue eyes that often wore a visionary look, a strong and resonant voice—his every attitude and motion conveyed the impression of power.

He belonged to no school or party, either in Church or State. To a great reverence for authority and tradition he joined a still greater passion for truth and personal liberty. Tolerant of all things save hypocrisy and baseness and the spirit of schism, he welcomed light and virtue from every quarter ; but once he had formed a conviction he was inflexible.

The most striking feature of his character was a profound originality. He read widely, but without

system, and chiefly to obtain food for reflection. Many men have been more erudite, but few indeed have had a more potent capacity of assimilating what they did consume. His mind was a subtle alchemy, which turned every element of experience into something 'rich and strange' and all his own, so that even his most trivial words and actions were the distinctive expression of himself and of no other.

He was one of those 'who discover truth, not so much by a process of reasoning, as by an intense gaze, and who announce their conclusions with the voice of a herald.' His understanding was specially remarkable for wealth and fruitfulness of ideas; he was a man of spiritual and mystical vision, and had the faculty of sending sudden shafts of light into the heart of the obscurest subjects.

In a famous passage Dr. Johnson has told us how Burke, in the course of five minutes' casual talk, would impress a stranger thrown by chance into his company in the public street. The same, in its due degree, might be truly said of Mr. Ireland. He was, in the phrase of Bacon, 'a full man,' and his nature was homogeneous throughout. Even his conversation differed in no essential respect from his sermons, except that it was cast in a more familiar vein, and seasoned with a rich and playful humour. Discourse with him not only kindled

thought, and constantly gave it new directions ; it produced a curious kind of mental ferment and exhilaration.

Often in his table-talk he would bubble over with a light exuberant fun, which, in his case at any rate, was, to a large extent, the surface ebullition of a deep seriousness. One morning at breakfast he began : ' What a blundering fool is man compared with that wise Master-Worker in Nature ! ' Then he launched out into a highly poetic description of the spring winds breathing upon the dead earth and waking it afresh to life and beauty ; the sower going forth and casting his seed into the furrows ; the springing green blade, nourished by the heat and showers of summer, until at length it stood erect, with full corn in the ear, white to the harvest. ' And then, after all these miracles and this perfect result, what do you find ? An ass of a woman goes and burns the porridge ! ' For so it was.

It was in the pulpit, however, that Mr. Ireland put forth all his powers and rose to the full height of his inward stature. In his sermons he combined, in an unusual degree, originality of conception, freshness and variety of thought, vigour and picturesqueness of expression, imaginative power, boldness and passion : at his best, when he preached *extempore*, he touched a height of grandeur and effectiveness which it is given to few preachers to attain. Yet he

suffered so much from nervousness, that he seldom ventured into a pulpit other than his own.

No one could fairly charge him with being a 'spectral' preacher—such that you could not tell from his sermons 'what age of the world he fell in; whether he had a father or a child; whether he was a citizen or a country man.' His discourses were, if one may use the phrase, full of flesh and blood; even in its loftiest flights his thought was penetrated by the elemental stuff of which all life and vital truth are made. His illustrations, too, were mainly drawn from the things which his hearers saw or handled every day. The stone-breaker sitting by his heap of stones, and, with bared head, asking a blessing upon his humble 'piece,' would grow into a sermon on: 'He was known of them in the breaking of bread.' The mine, the furnace, and the forge which stood around, he turned into parables of the soul, and so laboured to bring home to his hearers that man's life itself

> 'is not as idle ore,
> But iron dug from central gloom,
> And heated hot with burning fears,
> And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
> And batter'd with the shocks of doom
> To shape and use.'

Though claiming large liberty of thought, Mr. Ireland never wantonly assailed the Creeds, as

merely clever people are apt to do, like silly children smashing priceless antiques for sport. On the contrary, his endeavours were all after unity and edification; his preaching was positive and constructive; he confined himself to the things which he had tested and proved true, in the crucible of reason and experience. Hence it was that he spoke with the authority of a prophet; although, frequently, his manner and attitudes were more suggestive of a general addressing his troops before a battle. When he rose to 'the height of his argument,' he seemed, for the time at least, to dominate and subdue his hearers, and that less by the rush of his eloquence than by sheer force of character and will.

His devotional exercises, except when he read his prayers—and he seldom did so—were at least as impressive and distinctive as his sermons, and in perfect keeping with them. Some, indeed, might have judged that upon occasion they were almost too like his sermons and themselves bordered upon preaching. It must be allowed that they were sometimes 'eloquent'; but, if so, the eloquence was spontaneous. Certainly they were never cold or lifeless; they had the glow upon them of a soul whose natural ardour had been purged and reinforced by sacred fire. A strongly ethical strain ran through all his petitions; it was typical of him to

say: 'Grant each of us to know that he who maketh bad work, or worketh not at all, writeth himself down condemned before Thee'; or this: 'O Thou All-Generous One, Who gavest Thine only Son, Who art always giving Thyself away, when shall we, too, learn that it is far more blessed to give than to receive?'

No single label would fit his creed. He might be described as an evangelical of liberal views and broad human sympathies, with a decidedly mystical, if not ritualistic, tendency. Yet with all his breadth, he never declined from a devout spirituality—a spirituality, however, utterly alien to sensationalism or weak sentiment, his character being essentially of the robust and heroic type. Alike in soul and body, he seemed formed for command and adventure, ever ready and unafraid to lead the forlorn hope, or even singlehanded, if need were, to defend what he conceived to be the right. It seemed almost to give him special satisfaction when he could maintain the cause of the minority, or of the man who was down.

Mr. Ireland had the qualities of the true and keen sportsman—camaraderie, generosity, fondness for manly pastimes and the open air, delight in the works and ways of Nature. Often in his prayers he would spontaneously break forth into a kind of rhapsody of praise to the Creator of so much beauty: 'O God Thou hast set us in a marvellous

place: these green fields, this blue heaven, the woods and streams, and the deep peace that sleeps upon the bosom of the silent sea!'

Heart-felt was his love of all creatures, and of all natural things and processes: he loved them for their intrinsic beauty; perhaps he delighted in them still more as the symbols of things unseen—his mind was full of such images. He often spent his holiday in Shetland, and the sights and sounds of that region were deeply engraved upon his memory and imagination. Time and again, in his *extempore* discourses, he would bring forth out of this treasure-house a word-picture of some aspect of nature—those relating to the sea being specially realistic. One of his hearers recalls, as it were yesterday, such a picture in a sermon upon The Drag Net, preached at least twenty years ago. He still remembers the scene, depicted as if it were actually present: the blue heaving mass of the sea; the tiny black boat upon it moving slowly out from the shore; the dip of the oars as the rowers bent to their work; the splash of the net as it was cast over the side and slowly sank beneath the waves. Then came a weird feeling as the preacher took his hearers down in thought into the ocean depths, so visualising these that one saw the net sweeping through them, gathering in its prey of various fishes, while on every side were strange sea-things, some

floating, others swimming in the tide-stream, others, again, at rest upon the sea floor—all this as strongly conceived and vividly conveyed as Arnold's

> 'Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
> Where the winds are all asleep;
> Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;
> Where the salt weed sways in the stream;
> Where the sea beasts ranged all round
> Feed in the ooze of their pasture ground.'

If Mr. Ireland loved Nature much, he loved his fellowmen still more. The indefeasible worth of man and the progress of man were the poles of his thought. He never doubted, even when darkness seemed to thicken, that 'clouds would break' or that mankind was upon a road which, in the vast purposes of God, was destined to conduct them, at long last, to the perfect day of wisdom and goodness. This optimism it was which, perhaps, more than all else, kept his mind alive, and his spirit young and his enthusiasm for all Christian causes fervid and sanguine to the last day of his life.

Mr. Ireland had a generous capacity for moral indignation—a quality which he did not hesitate to draw upon, especially in his championship of the unfortunate and the oppressed. He was one of those —and they are not too numerous—who are not deterred, by any thought of personal consequences, from declaring what they conceive to be 'the whole

counsel of God.' The great principles of social righteousness—what he used to call 'applied Christianity,' always filled a large place in his preaching; yet his sense of justice was such that he strove to deal impartially with all classes. It is the simple truth to say that, though he was by no means infallible in his judgments, 'he neither feared nor flattered any flesh.' No man ever had a more wholesome contempt for the favour or disfavour of the public.

While he was beloved by those who really knew and could appreciate him, it would be idle to affirm that he was widely popular. He was too candid and resolute for that; he did not suffer fools gladly; and, besides, there were many who did not understand him. These last, indeed, were not wholly to blame, inasmuch as his *obiter dicta* must often, at least to simple folk, have seemed highly cryptic, as may appear from these two examples. In one part of the parish was a row of workmen's houses in front of which, and not many feet off, rose a lofty brick wall, which completely blocked the view. Most of the dwellers were non-churchgoers, and special ordinances had been provided for their benefit in a 'mission hall.' One day the assistant minister chanced to visit at one of these houses, when the housewife remarked, 'He 's an awfu' queer man, Mr. Ireland. Dae ye ken what he said to me the other

day? "Aye, Mrs. ——," says he, "and you don't attend the meetings. I 'm truly grieved to hear it; but, mind you, I 'm not surprised. I am quite sure it can't be easy to believe in God with a wall like that always staring you in the face." Aye, he 's an awfu' queer man, Mr. Ireland, an awfu' queer man.' Another day an ardent, but ignorant and perfectly futile reformer fell into a conversation with Mr. Ireland. The latter soon found that the discussion would not edify, so he brought it to a somewhat sudden close by the final thrust: 'My good man, you mean well, and your zeal is great; but, you know, you 're like a person with strong prehensile instincts, and no hands.'

A further incident of the row mentioned above throws some light upon the charity of his judgments and his infinite hope for men. A woman had died of excessive drinking, and the usual request was made for a burial service, which the writer of these lines was to conduct. As I was a novice at the work, Mr. Ireland produced a service book and indicated some scriptures that might be read. Amongst them was: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.' Greatly daring, I threw out a doubt as to whether this was quite in keeping with the character of the deceased. Thereupon Mr. Ireland turned swiftly round, fixed me with his eyes and sternly, almost fiercely, demanded: 'What are we to sit in judgment on a fellow-creature?'

Church courts and committees were not his element: though usually present for duty's sake, he seldom intervened. Upon occasion, however, when his spirit burned, he would break forth into utterances which, even when unpleasing or, as some might think, eccentric, invariably compelled attention, and 'gave men furiously to think.'

Few men of talent have been more free from vaulting ambitions. Fewer still, not having come into their kingdom, have been more contented and quietly happy in their lot. He did not, it is true, despise the good things of this life, yet his tastes were essentially simple. Give him the sea-shore or the hillside on a summer day; or the study fire on a winter night, with a congenial friend and a fresh idea, and he would 'make the pomp of kings ridiculous.'

He was not exempt from his share of great sorrows. His closing years were darkened by the death of his two sons, one of whom fell in battle on the Western front. These blows told heavily on one of Mr. Ireland's sensibilities; but, though the strong man's spirit bowed beneath them, it did not break. He was upborne by his innate fortitude and by the great Christian hope which seemed in his case to take added substance and reality from each fresh stroke of death. Immortality always bulked largely in the framework of his

thought; he never seemed at any time to have any doubts about its truth. The air of the unseen world was so native to his mind; the spiritual seemed to him so actual and vivid a part of the scheme of things, that he simply refused the idea that death could conquer the spirit of man, much more the strong Son of God.

Mr. Ireland did not in his lifetime win the place or the honours which, in virtue of his talents, he might justly have claimed. The causes of this were not obscure. His power of concentration was not equal to his other powers, so that the very wealth of his mind tended to embarrass him, and to make sustained and systematic thinking difficult. Besides, in the arts by which men commonly attain to what the world calls success—trimming and finesse and compromise—he was but a child; and as for self-seeking and self-advertisement, they were foreign to his nature.

> 'Unskilful he to fawn or seek for power
> By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour,
> Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
> More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.'

When Mr. Ireland died, one of our foremost laymen, no mean judge in such a matter, said of him: 'He was just about the greatest man of his day in the Church of Scotland, and scarcely any one knew him.' It is by the kindness of this friend that these papers,

which were first addressed to his own congregation, are now issued in permanent form.

Those who did know the author were aware that he had a gift of original genius—an elemental force of mind and character greater than was manifested in any of his considered acts or utterances ; when he did approximate to perfect self-expression, it was commonly in the heat and *abandon* of extemporaneous discourse. Nevertheless, these papers are highly characteristic of him, and they are now given to a wider public in the hope that those who choose to read them may, in some measure, be made to share in that mental stimulus and spiritual enrichment which, in his lifetime, he afforded to those who came under his influence. They have been selected and classified in an endeavour to reveal something of Mr. Ireland's ministerial method, as well as the width of his interests and the quality of his mind ; to bring together his opinions upon subjects identical or closely related ; and to exhibit, in their application to a variety of themes, the characteristic ideas which regulated and inspired all his mental and spiritual endeavour.

J. R.

The Manse, Burntisland,
August 1918.

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THE CHURCH IN THE PARISH

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE PARISH CHURCH

'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.'—Ps. cxxxiii. 1.

Our country of Scotland is divided into portions or districts called Parishes. The word Parish means those dwelling near to one another. The principle peculiar to the Parish Church, therefore, is the endeavour to organise the higher life of man upon the basis of neighbourhood.

1. It is from nearness to one another in the sense of dwelling together that industrial and moral obligations derive their character and their sanction. 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy *neighbour*,' 'Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy *neighbour's*,' 'Thou shalt love thy *neighbour* as thyself.' 'If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.' The place which is specially fitted for the cultivation and the exhibition of the life which is dutiful is the place of our abode. Here is our intenser being. We live a feebler life afar. Those who are nearest to us are our creditors for an hundred

talents. Our brethren unseen and unknown would be glad were we to state our obligations to them at an hundred *pence*. They would be rich if we paid them even so little. It is because we are such poor payers of the greater debt that we are so disinclined to acknowledge and to discharge the lesser. The extremities are cold because the heart is weak. To know man you must have him before you. The quack prescribes and kills by correspondence. When God would deliver man He became man. He tabernacled with men, and went about among them continually doing good. The longer He stayed with men the more He was moved to do and suffer on their account. His farewell injunction to the chosen preachers of the New Life is that they are to *begin* at Jerusalem. Thereafter they are to go into all the world. This is natural. It is from waters carefully gathered in reservoirs that distant towns and villages quench their thirst.

We are to seek to know men in the intimacy of the home and in neighbourhood with them. From this knowledge of them springs the condition of indebtedness to them. Knowledge it is which renders the account. We cannot pay our debt of help and pity and comradeship, and rebuke and encouragement, and just dealing and mercy and much else which we owe, without knowledge of man's capabilities and his distresses, and his sins

and virtues, and all the manner by which his greatness or his littleness is conditioned and explained.

The organisation of the national life for religious purposes upon the principle of neighbourhood is, therefore, a reasonable and useful arrangement. The Parish Church is this life of man so organised.

2. Sectarianism is a different thing. We think it is a very inferior thing. It organises men on the basis of opinion. It calls upon those who agree with it to separate from those who do not agree with it. The Parish Church invites people because they live near to each other to endeavour to live yet more near, by the cultivation of sympathy and consideration and by the exercise of charity. The tendency to fall apart from one another because of difference of opinion is to be met and overcome by the higher duty of keeping together.

Differences in due subordination are but enlivening varieties. Pressed unduly they are destructive of that which is greater than all difference—the essential oneness of the race and of communities.

Sectarianism keeps itself in evidence amongst us. Many people yield to be assorted and classified by it, as though it were a high and necessary principle of life. It is no such thing. Its power over men, its influence in a parish or community is merely the measure of the weakness of that which is better than itself. Just as darkness is the absence of light,

and death is absence of life, Sectarianism is the absence of those truer views of duty and relationship which make for organic unity among men, and especially among men who dwell together.

THE COMPLETE LIFE

I

'Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.'—Rom. xii. 11.

Man is progressive chiefly as he is gregarious. For progress requires knowledge, and knowledge of man is got by observation at close quarters. Nomads never improve. The Parish Church is not a tent in the wilderness. It is the symbol of a settled life. It urges men to use the opportunities of knowing and doing which a settled life affords. It says: 'Know thyself, know thy near fellows, that thou mayest know humanity, and know thy debt to it, near and far away. Thou owest to it to work, and to rejoice, and to think.'

Labour, Recreation and Thought is the whole duty of man to man. He who understands the universe will not conceive that he has adjusted himself to it aright until his life exhibits itself as composed of these three elements.

We have workers amongst us and hard workers. We do not wish them to work harder. But we desire that there should be some thought on the part of the worker of who he is who works. People about us take their recreation and their pleasures. We do not desire that human joy should be less. But we do desire that there should be some thought on the part of men and women in their recreations and enjoyments, of the suitableness or the unsuitableness of the forms and degrees of self-indulgence. Without this thoughtfulness there will be no self-reverence in labour or in enjoyment ; nor will there be sufficient consideration for others.

Without the spiritual the natural life is incomplete. It wants something. The hill and wood and river do not make the scene of beauty. No, not till the sun rises and sheds upon them the glory of his shining.

So, man labouring to live is not a specially attractive spectacle. But cast upon the humblest labourer some thought of his origin, his nature and his destiny, and, immediately, because of the new light which encompasses him and his toil, and his home and his little ones, we experience a different feeling regarding him. We feel respect and even awe. While therefore the people who dwell together are workers, they are human workers, and it is the Church which lays stress upon their common humanity. Without

religion we should forget this: we should ignore it. We should fall into a way of thinking and judging of the people about us merely in reference to the work they do and the money they make.

II

When people convene in the Parish Church they come as human beings who have preserved this truth about themselves, that they are more than their labour and greater than their riches or their poverty. Each and all have a great possession. They have a nature which is more valuable than anything else in the world, for it can hold consciously the thought of God, and of goodness, and of resolute endeavour after righteousness. The Church of Christ bestows its benediction upon the man who is labouring for the meat that perisheth. Religion teaches respect for him who has fitted himself into the industrial arrangements of the community of which he is a part. But this is only half its utterance. To stop here would be to break its speech in twain. Man may win more than wages, more even than great riches. Having from God a capacity for goodness, he may, if he can be induced to use the higher diligence, add knowledge; and to his knowledge, self-restraint; and to his self-restraint, patience; and to his patience, godliness; and to his godliness,

brotherly-kindness, and to his brotherly kindness, love.

Does not human life, for its wellbeing, for its full grace and dignity, need these things as well as bread and meat, and articles made of wood and iron, and all the other products of mental and manual labour ?

Here the steam whistle is obeyed. Men crowd forth in early morning upon its summons to do their part as workers. Religion honours this obedience. On rest days, the Church bell rings. Its note is not less musical than the iron-throated whistle. Has it an equal claim to be obeyed ? It is equally the call of man to man. The steam-whistle tells what is true :—that we owe it to each other to help to bring into our midst the necessaries, and it may be the comforts of the natural life.

Here and throughout the land, the Parish Church bell informs us, or reminds us, that we owe to each other another debt. We owe it to each other and in a special sense as dwellers together in one place to love one another ; and because of this love, that is a reasonable call which summons us to work in ourselves, and with others, in order to bring amongst us and increase for our using the peaceable fruits of righteousness. For do we not know that the man is but half nourished who seeks to live by 'bread alone.'

HOW THE CHURCH IS ESTABLISHED

Kings shall be thy nursing fathers.—Isa. xlix. 23.

The Church in Scotland is older than the law in Scotland. There was an organised self-governing, self-sustained Church in Scotland before the law of King and Parliament became supreme over all parts of the country, and over all conditions of men. The Church was not created by enactment therefore, as some people think it was. No; it was only sanctioned by law and confirmed in its liberty and rights. The Church is to be regarded as established in the various parishes of Scotland by reason of its possession therein of a certain share of the revenues of the land for behoof of the inhabitants thereof, and for religious purposes. The Church is national in the sense that the Presbyterian form of government was at one time preferred and chosen by the highest civil authority to be the form of Church government for Scotland. This choice and preference is incorporated in the Act of Union. But the chief feature of the Scottish Church is that it is parochial. Its property and rights are not national —they are parochial. They belong peculiarly and exclusively to the inhabitants of each parish. The buildings and other property of other Churches

belong to their several bodies or corporations. The Parish Kirk and its revenues is the property of the parishioners, or dwellers within a certain legally defined area, called the 'Parish.' The Heritors are Trustees for the Parishioners.

Because of the rapid increase of population the Church of Scotland has been striving to create new parishes. This means the sub-division of old parishes; the building of new churches; and the provision of fresh funds. Since 1843 there have been erected and endowed more than four hundred new parishes, and the cost has been upwards of one and a half millions of pounds. All this has been done by the Church through her collections and the gifts of her members and friends. But observe how faithfully the Church has adhered to the establishment principle in her creation of new parishes. When you allow yourself to think that other religious bodies are more alert in planting new churches, remember that they do not *establish* churches. They are under no necessity to do more than to build them. They need not even pay for them until long after they are built and in use. The Church of Scotland contemplates the *establishment* of each of its new churches. No church can be recognised in law as a Parish Church unless it is (1) Free of debt; (2) possessed of a sum of money, called the endowment, the interest of which is sufficient to maintain a

minister of religion, in so far as he may be called upon to minister to those who are unable to contribute to his support; (3) the new Parish Church must assign a portion of its entire space, generally one-tenth part, for the free accommodation of the poor of the new parish. You will notice those points, and bear them in mind. We are not criticising the methods of other churches, we are merely showing you what we believe to be the 'more excellent way' of the Church of our fathers. No debt; endowment peculiar to the new parish; and the allocation of space for the poor—such are the elements in the old parochial system, which are preserved and embodied in the erection of each and all of our new parishes.

PAROCHIAL VISITATION—ITS MEANINGS[1]

'Ye visited me.'—Matt. xxv. 36.

I

The Parish Church by its constitution belongs to the parishioners. Hence the good tradition of the National Church that each individual who resides within the parish is entitled to the services of the parish minister, and to the use of the Parish Church. This is one reason why visitation is usually made

[1] 1892.

by parish ministers or their assistants from *door to door* throughout the parish. Other churches *may*, by their ministers or agents, go through a district from house to house. The National Church *must*. Whatever belongs to a man ought to be brought to that man and offered for his acceptance.

A Disestablished Church would have nothing to give without first receiving a money equivalent. This is what some people are pleased to call Religious Equality.

The instinct of the parish minister is to recognise the equal value of each soul within his parish. The tendency of Sectarianism is to value souls according to yearly income.

No parish minister takes credit to himself because of his inclination to think more of the common humanity of his parishioners than of their money. He has always sense enough to thank the wisdom of his forefathers for the system of Church Establishment which directs and enables him thus to regard them. We are neither boasting nor calumniating. Nevertheless it is true that the tendency of Voluntaryism is toward respect of persons. Endowed Establishment is not without its possible abuses. Nevertheless its tendency is to regard and value man as man, without consideration of whether they have or have not.

II

Alas! my poorer brother and sister that you are so incredulous about your own great value! Alas! that you are so often disinclined to take and to use what is your own! The right is yours to meet in public worship with those among whom you live, in a structure which is yours, at services conducted by your ministers, though you may not pay them one penny. And why is this so? Because the National Church of Scotland in dealing with the people of Scotland begins with the fact of our common humanity, and our common interest in the purposes of God with us and with all men in Christ Jesus.

The separation of man from man in sympathy, and in mutual respect and helpfulness, is to be explained by separation in the religious life. It is the peculiar function of national religion to foster unity among men on the basis of facts far greater than material or even intellectual differences. Hence we lay stress upon a Parish Church, or a meeting place for all who dwell together, that together they may keep among them and cherish the truest thought of God, and the most hopeful thought of man. Hence also we visit *all* parishioners, that all may know that the Christian religion does not acknowledge orders and classes of men to the extent or

degree to which men unthinkingly submit themselves to be arranged and labelled.

Door-to-door visitation thus serves another end. You ask, Is Christ divided? The discordant voices of the numerous sects answer, Yes. The method of the National Church in the matter of parochial visitation seeks to remind us that there is a *common* fount for all the murmuring rills of spiritual hope and life and effort, and that mayhap somewhat farther down the ages, and nearer the infinite sea, they may meet and flow together as one grand river, in might and joy and beauty.

Who has learned to think that the National Church, by its humble and laborious visits from house to house, is the single utterance in our land, hopeful of this oneness for a shattered Christendom?

Yet so it is.

THE UNTRUTH OF THE MISSION HALL

'They were all with one accord in one place.'—Acts ii. 1.

I

THE function of the Church is to bring all men into the one fold. All men are on one and the same earth. This fact is the prime fact. All other facts about nations and peoples are temporary and local. They are modified by time and physical conditions.

The first of one age may be the last in a succeeding age. The slave becomes the enslaver; the spoiler becomes the prey; the strong are as children, and children are the men of power. But yet we are altogether in one place. This world is the stage for every actor. Nothing greater and nothing less. A Cathedral is the statement of this fact in stone. A Cathedral is a truth. A Parish Church is a feebler attempt to declare the same truth, to exhibit the same fact. The conventicle is an attempt to say something: but most certainly it is not this thing. It may tell us, however, that some men have fallen from the larger truth.

Now, in connection with the National Church we have been made familiar with the Mission Hall. I have personally been very familiar with it. What do I think of it? I regard it as a failure on the part of the National Church *to speak truth*. You know what we intend to convey by such an expression; we mean that methods are good or bad in proportion to their correspondence with what is fact. The Mission Hall does not correspond with any fact. It expresses what is not a fact. The fact is as we have stated it, and the Mission Hall does not exhibit that fact. If the Parish Church helps to utter a truth by close correspondence with the fact of man's oneness in all things great and lasting, the Mission Hall gives out no testimony to

that fact. It says—'We ought not to try to realise our oneness by meeting for public worship at the same place; we ought rather to emphasise our differences by meeting in different places. Our difference is the thing which is true and not our oneness.'

Let it not be thought that we charge the National Church with wilfully uttering in this way an untruth. The Church is a Church only in so far as it succeeds in witnessing to what is true. To this end it is constantly striving. But it is not always succeeding. In the Mission Hall method it fails of success. The Parish Church is a truth, and just because it is a truth, the Mission Hall is an untruth.

II

It is pleasant to know that the Church is coming to recognise this. It is not nearly so fond of the Mission Hall method as it once was. But why not the Hall if not the Mission Hall? Yes; the Hall where men may read and talk and smoke, and take part in innocent amusement. This Hall by all means, for by this Hall the Church might in places in our own parish speak a truth, and speak it in much love. The truth such a Hall will utter is a disagreeable truth, a sorrowful truth, and yet a truth, and a truth that needs just such expression. Shall we not tell you this truth? Why not?

This is the truth which such a Hall declares :— 'The masses of your population have not in their homes the opportunity of indulging their social instincts as the dwellers in large houses have. They must seek some place to which the public have access. The only such places are public-houses, and habitual resort to such places is fraught with serious dangers. Shall we not, as a Church, say that we know this to be the case ? And how does it become a Church to utter itself in such a matter ? Surely by providing such a Hall as may serve at once the purpose of a place of innocent resort, of aggressive work, and of worship to the extent to which the dwellers about it are unable to use the Parish Church.'

Not as places of worship for poorer or less favoured brethren are the Halls to be commended, but as a practical and loving recognition of disabilities and of buffetings of adverse circumstances in the lot of those who are one with us, and are yet in some things unlike us, because their garden has had few trees in it, save that which bore the forbidden fruit, while many of us have had a large choice of trees whose fruit was good for food and pleasant to behold.

Who shall say what the enlightened man will finally prefer ? Who can doubt the fate of those who have no choice ? Meanwhile it cannot be

wrong to plant one other tree that the present day state of man in his rise be not less helpful than that olden state in which he fell.

MARRIAGES AND BAPTISMS IN CHURCH

'Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman: but Christ is all, and in all.'—Col. iii. 11 (R.V.).

If man is capable of advance, and if he is advancing, some part of his conduct will show ahead of what is every-day and ordinary.

The hill tops are the first to enter the light of the morning. The mutual love of man and woman, and the love of parents for their children are the most typical facts in human nature. If anywhere in all his being man is pure and tender, wise and noble, it is here. By a divine instinct marriage and infant baptism have been made, through the ceremonial which accompanies their due celebration; by the office of the celebrant; and by the place of celebration; symbolic of man in his higher designation as a child of God, and ever likest God when his life is ruled by the power of affections which are both natural and ennobling.

When a man and a woman are made one by a worthy love; when parents find that their deepest thought about their child is best uttered in the words

of the Lord Jesus, 'Of such is the Kingdom of God'; and when this belief instructs their hearts in view of the duty of the godly upbringing of their child, then it may truly be said that human nature in these individual instances has entered some way upon the higher life that is to be. To them has been vouchsafed some foretaste of the rich heritage of the race. The best in them glows responsive to the hallowed rays which, partially at least, glorify and transfigure them.

Here there ought not to be either humble or haughty reminders of social difference between man and man—the poor man married in the 'rows'—and the rich man in his ample mansion; the poor man's child named into the family of God in the one-roomed house, and the rich man's child baptized amid the loud ostentatiousness of a mere worldly success.

In the Parish Church men are men and nothing more; they are men and nothing less. There alone as yet they are '*in Christ Jesus*.' In the world men are still warring in racial, and social, and political jealousies and hatreds. The world does not know them. It sadly unestimates them; its nomenclature is mostly a system of nicknames.

In the faith and hope of the Church, man lives as he is, in all his wonderful capacity for better things. It is because of this that the Church

advises that marriage and baptism should be within the edifice which is set apart, alike from hovel and from palace, as the one home on earth, of man as he exists in the divine thought. Serious, indeed, should be the reason which would compel the Church of God to descend from its inspired opinion of man, and deal with him in his most sacred relations in the place and in the surroundings of his earthly lot.

If you would understand aright the significance of marriage and baptism in church, you must think of them, henceforth, as the protest of the Church on Christ's behalf against the prevalent heresy of a blinded world, which loses sight of the true worth of man, alike in the glitter of his wealth and in the gloom of his poverty.

Take care of the dignity and worth of human nature! There are many people ready to vilify it, and there are many occasions upon which it is forced to appear degraded and mean. But when it ought to be at its best; when it is entering the holiest of alliances, as well as the most significant of relationships, some endeavour should be made to find a tabernacle worthy of its transfiguration. For this purpose the humblest church is better suited than the finest mansion; but not even the noblest cathedral is too grand.

THE BENEVOLENT FUND[1]

'I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.'—Job xxix. 16.

WHATEVER else, and whatever more, our present attempt to increase the capital of the Benevolent Fund may mean, it certainly means that we are perfectly sure that the present methods of dealing with the poor are insufficient. I have before now sought to draw public attention to the Poorhouse and the pauper's grave. It is not improbable that the Report of the Royal Commission on Poor Law Amendment will emphasise everything that I have ever said or written in regard to our treatment of the poor. We shall be told that we are very far behind other nations in our handling of the problem of poverty. It will be made clear to us that the pauper, the Poorhouse, and the pauper's grave are all evil creations of our greed and heartlessness. It will be brought out that the separation of the poor from the personal knowledge, oversight, and sympathy of the well-to-do is making wide the gulf between those who, after all, are fellow-citizens as well as fellow-men and women. We shall learn that our refusal to discriminate between the decent, honest, self-respecting poor, and the idle, shiftless loafer is breaking down the virtue of the virtuous,

[1] 1908.

and fostering the vices of the vicious. Even in dealing with unemployment we are mournfully antiquated in our methods. The kind of man who goes about telling a lying tale of his woeful plight receives the contributions of the charitable, while the man who has a home, with wife and children, and a rent to pay, but with nothing coming in, is left to endure in silent hopelessness.

I know it has been said in connection with our present effort that the old-age pension does away with the duty of members of the Church to aid its poor and aged members. The State has provided for them! Has it? How many deserving poor reach the age of seventy years! And what of the children? In truth this pension for threescore years and ten is but too suggestive of the greased pole with the leg of mutton at the top. The five shillings a week at seventy years of age is about as generally attainable as the leg of mutton. And there is no fun in trying. The people who suffer from poverty are of all ages, and it is only an aggravation of present misery to be told that relief will come at an age which few expect to see. Meanwhile, ought it not to be the aim of the Christian Church to deliver its members from all fear of being pauperised?

'KIRKING' THE COUNCIL[1]

THERE is nothing so easy as to speak of a thing as being a mere form. The people who thus speak are generally destitute of ideas. They cannot bring to the perception of things visible any knowledge of that which is inward and hidden in the thing they look upon. To them the whole category of created things is voiceless. Even the best endeavour of men, as individuals, or in their corporate capacity, to embody and thus show forth some mental or spiritual consciousness, is to such people quite expressionless. They remark upon the attitude, the pageantry, the show; but they have no eye for the underlying significance. There are very many, indeed, like Wordsworth's Peter Bell:—

'He roved among the vales and streams,
In the green wood and hollow dell;
They were his dwellings night and day—
But Nature ne'er could find the way
Into the heart of Peter Bell.

'In vain, through every changeful year,
Did Nature lead him as before;
A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.'

It is one of our great mercies that the earth and the things in the earth have no tendency to shrink to

[1] 1893.

the littleness of our Peter Bells. Longsuffering is discernible in the Universe. It is evidently prepared to wait through ages upon the growing capacity of man. Not without 'groaning and travailing' does it wait. Like Jesus, it thus articulates its pain: 'Have I been so long time with you, and yet have ye not known me?' The Church in far-off days was the rude circle of stones on the mountain top. Here 'the Council' of the rude tribes was 'kirked.' When we came in this land to have stately edifices, there, with impressive religious ceremonial, our kings were crowned. Our Sovereign Lady, Queen Victoria, was crowned in Westminster Abbey, where the Coronation Oath was put to her by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

These forms of 'kirking' and the 'kirking' of our Burgh Magistrates have the same significance. They mean that men have discovered that the world is ruled; and that from the Supreme Ruler is derived the suggestion of all rule and authority among men. The field of battle or the polling-booth, as the manners of the age determine, is the place and circumstance where choice is made of the persons and the policy which shall prevail. The Church, the House of God the Lord, has ever been the place where, in peace and concord, after strife is past, the chosen ruler is acknowledged as having right to govern, but right only in so far and for so long as

he fitly represents to men the righteousness of the Highest, before Whom rulers and ruled are bowed together in a common act of worship. The first 'kirking' of our Burgh Council took place in Gartsherrie Parish Church upon a recent Sunday, and what we have written above is some little of the meaning of their presence there.

CITIZENS' SUNDAY

In London, and also in many of the large towns of England, a usage has arisen of great value to the national wellbeing, and which is known as 'Citizens' Sunday.' The aim of this institution is to secure the setting apart of one Sunday in each year for the consideration within the House of God of the duties and responsibilities alike of the citizen and of the municipal authorities. It is felt that citizenship needs to be expounded and its position clearly set forth in order to prepare it to make reasonable demands upon its rulers, and moreover to furnish assurance from time to time of its readiness for progressive action. Hitherto the ratepayers' meeting has been the only opportunity open to the citizen and his actual or prospective rulers for the interchange of views. And the ratepayers' meeting is rarely helpful to a proper understanding between

the citizens and those whom they elect to govern them. Moreover the ratepayers' meeting cannot hope to rise to the high level of a gathering of Christian people who are desirous of considering their citizenship as a relationship which only their religion can enable them to fulfil. The ratepayers' meeting and its scant attendance, and the marked absence of nearly every prominent citizen, except the few noted wirepullers, is responsible to a serious extent for the difficulty of saving municipal government from degradation and contempt. The treatment at ratepayers' meetings of candidates for office has not uniformly confirmed conscientious and capable men in their desire and readiness to serve the public.

We now require as citizens meetings of another sort. The time is fully come for the endeavour to consecrate municipal government to the highest ends. This implies that the citizenship of a town is desirous of cultivating in itself the proper spirit of citizenship, and that it will look for a proper spirit in its rulers. How to achieve the very most, and the very best, for the people who are living together within the legally defined area called the burgh, is the true end of municipal rule. To give the people the most sufficient and sanitary dwellings, to make the best possible roads, to keep open-air spaces in abundance throughout the burgh, to aid the recreative life of the toilers, and especially their children,

to exhibit taste in public buildings and in public places, to do away with all that is hurtful and offensive, to suppress within the governing body all tendency to jobbery, to give the lead to the people promptly in all national events: these are some of the things which enlightened citizenship should require of its rulers. And who is sufficient for these things! I am not using the language of cant when I say that these things will neither be asked nor granted, neither earnestly demanded nor well performed, except by a citizenship which has dedicated its aspirations and powers to the best service of man in the spirit of the religion of Jesus. I am strongly in sympathy with a Citizens' Sunday, because I should like to see the full possibilities of our associated life consecrated to the wellbeing of the community. They will never be realised otherwise. They are only very imperfectly realised amongst us at present.

THE CHURCHMAN[1]

I

A MEMBER of the National Church is or ought to be more than a unit of a Christian body. He is not merely an adherent of one of many religious sects.

[1] 1892.

If he is rightly instructed, he will come to feel that he is helping to preserve, embody, and exhibit in the age in which he lives the continuity of the Christian faith in the profession and life of the nation.

The schismatic tendency of our Scottish Reformed Church is notorious. The last two centuries in particular have produced a prolific crop of secessions. We do not refer to the causes and occasions of these further than to say that they did not take place upon the question either of Establishment or of Endowment. In no one of these secessions was the act of separation contemplated as final. Unable to secure at the time deliverance from what they deemed hurtful and oppressive, they left the Church, declaring their willingness to return when the evils complained of were removed.

One thing, however, they did not take sufficient account of, and that was the difficulties in the way of return. As redress was delayed, generations grew up who accepted the position of separateness without sharing in the feelings of the older secessionists. Having never been themselves part of the National Church, they had no experience of the pangs of separation, nor of the earnest hope of reunion, which had lingered long in the hearts of their fathers.

When in process of time the chief cause of the Church's troubles had been removed by the aboli-

tion of Patronage, ecclesiastical parties in Scotland had assumed all the characteristics of distinct, and separate, and antagonistic religious bodies. This condition of things is described by the term Denominationalism.

II

It is well for human nature that it can get used to almost anything. Many of our countrymen have come to regard the existing state of religious matters in Scotland as natural and necessary. Perhaps some have grown up so dwarfed by the atmosphere and nourishment of the sects that they are not able even to imagine a better condition of things. We invite you, nevertheless, to believe that sooner or later Scotland will seek to adjust itself rationally and sympathetically to the Christianity of the world. It must first become coherent and intelligible in religious matters within itself. If nationality is not to depart from us altogether, we must utilise it in order to federate those conflicting ecclesiastical tribes and families whose warfares embitter our social state, and divide and weaken our moral and spiritual force.

The Churchman is not necessarily a superior person. He may think less, and do less, and give less, and love less than his non-conforming or seceding brother. Very often it is so. But it is not

always so. We suggest one high function which the Churchman ought especially to qualify himself to fulfil. The Churchman of to-day ought consciously, though humbly, to regard himself as called upon to evidence for Christian unity as a condition once realised in our national experience long ago, and deserving to be sought after, if haply we may know it once again in all its power and beauty. How many Church members keep this desire burning like a fire in their hearts? And yet to do this constitutes their peculiar debt to their countrymen, and to the age. They are part of the deep middle waters which have kept their channel. Let them not boast over streams that have been broken off for awhile by opposing boulders, and have made new courses for themselves. The Churchman is nothing if he does not by his views, his methods, and his spirit deliberately make for unity, not merely with religious dissent, but especially with all in the national life which is unattached by love and effort to the cause of Him whose will is oneness.

THE CHURCH AND THE YOUNG

BAPTISM

I

'Of such is the kingdom of God.'—Mark x. 14.

He was too worthy a man and too good a friend to mock me. He had humour, but I was certain it was no trick. It came very carefully packed. It had been dealt with like a precious thing. It required to pass through inquisitive hands, so its wrappings were well secured. Cold and wet it might be expected to encounter, so it was swathed again and again in straw rope, and last of all in canvas. It bore a label, a metal label, well fastened upon it. And in large letters upon the label was the name, 'Gloire de Dijon.' I knew this was meant for the name. The thing did not look like it. A greenish-brown stick it was, with two withered leaves upon it, and a few dried fibres for roots. My friend had reverence for flowers. He had great reverence for a good rose. He had sent me his best. I could not doubt it. I felt nervous. How was I to act? The season was late autumn. It would be months before growth set in. If this thing were the grand plant my friend had promised

to send to me, I must at once put it in the best soil, place the pot in the most favourable situation, and attend to it through the winter with the most scrupulous care.

I expected a visit from my friend in mid-summer. And in mid-summer he came. The rose had three stems and fifteen fine blooms. Yes, it was worthy of the name it bore. The label was not needed except for people very ill-informed in the matter of roses. My friend questioned me closely regarding my treatment of the gorgeous plant. I had done fairly well, he said. Yet was the compost not the best procurable. Nor had the watering been always judicious. Nor had the situation been the best throughout. There might well, he said, have been thirty blooms.

I told him with some hesitation of my feelings upon the first arrival of the 'dried stick.' I spoke of my fears during the long winter. Some people, I told him, had laughed at the unlikely thing with the grand label. I confessed to many sins of omission and of commission of which I had been guilty. The least fault in treatment had, I now acknowledged, told against the future of the plant. 'At all events,' said my friend, 'you did well to believe me, in spite of all; and there is the proof, in the fragrance that fills your house, and in all this rich flowering, that I spoke no false thing about the

capacity for beauty which was hidden in the leaflet, root, and stem I sent you.'

O, Jesus, Heavenly Gardener, we know Thou didst take the naked infants from their mothers' arms, and name them anew in the fulness of Thy knowledge and the richness of Thy love. Then and for ever more, because Thou saidst it—Thou who art wiser than we—humanity in its feeblest is of more account than suns and stars, and all the passing glory of the earth. 'Of *such* is the kingdom of God.' Help us to believe in this, otherwise some day we shall miss the fragrance and the bloom. There is moral excellence in the world in strict proportion to the belief in man's capacity for goodness. Neglect of man is unbelief in man. 'Lord, we believe, help Thou our unbelief.'

II

'I will write upon him my new name.'—Rev. iii. 12.

The first recorded act of man as an intelligent creature is found in the second chapter of the Book of Genesis. The man, we are told, gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field. His intelligence taught him that the sun was not the moon, a mountain was not a tree, and a crocodile was not a river; and he himself was none of these things. He began to use a

distinct and separate sound to indicate himself, the sun and the moon, the mountain and the tree, the crocodile and the river, and he tried to put into each separate sound something which would express the likeness of one thing to another, and also its unlikeness to everything else. As his acquaintance with the world grew, he had to find new names for new objects. As his knowledge of things already named increased, he found that more and yet more meaning came to be conveyed to himself and others by the names he used. Things which are new to human experience, and fresh combinations of things already known, represent on one side the expansion of human knowledge: on the other side is the more accurate and profound acquaintance with the properties and qualities of the things themselves. It is with this side of human knowledge that we have at present to do. It is of a being known in a sense and named from the beginning, but yet for long unknown though named, that we desire to speak. That being is man. It is not a question of finding for him a new name. It is a matter of endeavouring to induce the world to associate higher attributes, capacities, and powers, with the use of the old name.

Always it has been the same world. If we ever speak of it as a *new* world, we mean that discovery and insight have filled the old term with fresh signi-

ficance. Sun, water, soil, iron, light, heat are old words ; yet in comparison with what was present to the minds of our remote forefathers when they used those terms, that which the same words convey to us is almost as the difference between a great goblet holding but a few drops and the same vessel largely filled. Nowhere is there one such vessel whose contents overflow.

Our religion, it is true, speaks of a *new* Testament, a *new* creature, a *new* man, *new* heavens, and a *new* earth ; it speaks also of making all things *new*. It is more true, however, because, more exact, to say with the Preacher, 'there is no *new* thing under the sun.' Yet, as the result of righter vision and longer gazing and careful noting of what age by age is seen, much and many things have become as new—even God and man. Eternally the old is being transfigured with fresh accessions of glory ; but the full glory of a thing waits upon the full knowledge of it. The Church is that portion of mankind which professes to have accepted the new knowledge of man which came by Jesus Christ. It alone regards man in the light of this fuller knowledge. Only the Church, therefore, is the fit authority to pronounce over the individual members of the race the name by which they are henceforth to be known. Thus named, each one becomes ideally a new man. To-day we are accustomed to the

name and the surname ; but for many a century of the Christian era many had no other name than that which we now call the Christian name. The *sur*name, be it Smith or Thomson or Russell, as the prefix (*super*) implies, arose in connection with old tribal distinctions or occupations or places of residence. The surname is still merely tribal or social. By usage, if not by law, the child takes the surname of his father. With the surname the Church has no concern. To the Church, prince and peasant are alike human, and nothing more. Human, however, with the new significance of humanity. It is to this humanity that the Church gives its name.

III

'Fitliest beneath the sacred roof proceeds the ministration.'
WORDSWORTH.

The religious view of man is the only comprehensive view. It is the equivalent in its own sphere of the skilled gardener's opinion of a plant. The worldly estimate of man is various, but it is never complete. The world mostly observes and notes those qualities in man which it can make use of to its own advantage. The counterpart to the worldly opinion regarding man is the opinion offered regarding a thing by one who knows only a little about it. The reason why we put so much stress upon right

naming of man is just that right naming of him proceeds from knowledge of him, and therefore necessarily precedes right treatment of him.

One great end of religion is to bring about the right treatment of man, and religion heralds its purpose and begins its work by naming him aright.

Man is not named by religion into his earthly relationship, nor into his earthly lot ; not into his tribe, nor into his social caste ; not into his probable poverty and hardship, nor into his heritage of wealth and comfort. The world does this part of his naming ; for we have said that this is what the world sees in man. Religion names the infant 'Into the great family in heaven and on earth named by the name of Christ.' In Baptism religion serves each one 'an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ Jesus.' Each Baptism is therefore a summons addressed to us to accept and to hold fast to a right knowledge of humanity, and to make that right knowledge the basis of all after-treatment of human nature in ourselves and others.

To symbolise this view of humanity, the font stands conspicuous in every Christian Church. The office of the Registrar is the appointed place where the child receives its name according to the knowledge, and to suit the purposes of the State. The Church is the proper and fitting place where the childhood of humanity is received by the religion

of Jesus, and named with a name expressive of that higher knowledge and richer hope regarding man which have come to us from the teaching of Jesus.

There is no *reason* for the present Scottish habit of baptism in the house. There is a probable explanation, however. For many years previous to our day the Presbyterian Church in Scotland made a great deal of having infants baptized in Church and in presence of the congregation. Moreover, a great deal was made of 'laying vows' upon the father of the child, who stood, it might be for half an hour, in full view of the people, and was spoken at by the minister all that time. To many men this must have been a severe ordeal, and it was an ordeal without any compensating good result. The likelihood is that the man so situated was the only person who neither heard nor understood what was being addressed to him. This custom was also a severe trial to the mother of the child, and bad consequences frequently followed the excitement of a public baptism.

The rareness of baptism in Presbyterian churches is thus explained as the revulsion of feeling from all this unwise and harmful publicity.

We think that the proper course is for parents to bring their children to church for baptism at some appointed time when the congregation is not assembled. Now and again it is useful to us all to

have a child in our midst, and this occasional public baptism can be secured when it is the special wish of parents to have their child baptized in this way.

When the child or the mother is not in sound health, baptism of the child in the home is the rational course.

A TRINITY OF INFLUENCE

> 'As we train the children, so
> Is the future made,
> That shall reign when we are low.'
> ROBINSON.

THE devout Home : the Children's Service : the Sunday School : these three : and we have written them in the order of their value. Together they constitute a trinity of inspiring and shaping and instructing influence which all children should be deliberately subjected to.

THE HOME

The tendency of the Sunday School is undeniably to make the home of no account in the religious training of childhood. People should be warned against this danger. They should be told that it is better for the child to read one verse at its mother's knee than to spend an hour inside a Sunday School. It is better for a working man to give ten minutes

on a week-day or Sunday to the simplest talk about God our Father, about Jesus Christ our Saviour, than to 'send his child out' to the best Sunday School with perfect regularity. And the tone and spirit of the home are even more valuable than its formal acts. Its atmosphere is more helpful to the child morally and spiritually than its injunctions or its rebukes. You may treat a plant rightly as regards soil and water, and heat and light, but if the atmosphere, the air it breathes be polluted, that plant will not thrive. In a nature like ours the great river of well-doing, self-reviving life is supplied from innumerable founts, and these founts are the homes of the people. Before we recommend the Sunday School we must be impressed with its feebleness, if its purpose is not deliberately and earnestly encouraged and supported by the life in the home. Where the home contradicts the Sunday School, and when the school teaching condemns the home, the child is doubly imperilled. When home and School have one heart, one voice, one method, the child is doubly helped.

The old Romans fought in three lines, composed of first, the young men: then, the fully matured; and last, the veteran warriors. Many a battle was won by the first line alone. That contest was desperate in which the first and second lines being routed, the onset had to be withstood by the veterans

alone. With us the order is reversed, *The veteran force for good is the home.*

We require, then, that it be a constant care with parents so to speak and do, so to order the whole life in the home, that the children shall not miss of being able in after years to say that the good was first and best seen of them in the conduct and character of their father and their mother. Not one; but both. Not the mind of childhood perplexed and pained by two conflicting characters, whose conduct is condemnatory the one of the other; but with the necessary and wholesome diversity of graces and virtues, both parents forming together one strong source from which goes forth daily revelation to childhood's vision of what is beautiful because it is good.

The Service for the Young

We are desirous of training the children and youth of this parish to a usage the most ancient in the world, a usage which is now and ever has been the first necessity as well as the chiefest glory of the intelligent creature—the worship of God.

Public worship involves the adoration of the love of God which is fatherly. But children are the *little children* of God. If the words Father and Mother are pleasant words to them, and if the home life is their happiest life, it is quite right that

they should be regularly convened as the smaller members of the great family loved of our Father who is in Heaven. When the lower rungs of the ladder are firm and strong, it is easy to ascend. The earthly home-love, if it is of the right kind, leads the child mind to perceive and rejoice in the love of God. Moreover, this love of the home is not for one child but for all the children of the home. When we are to speak, therefore, of the Father, which is in Heaven, we should gather the children in numbers from their earthly homes, and having them all together, help them to realise the largeness and impartiality of the Heavenly love.

This desire and effort is in the first instance specially concerned with the young. It is a service specially prepared for the young, and it is conducted with a view to reach and affect the young. But there is nothing *childish* about it, nor is there anything in it unsuitable to adults.

Moreover there has been devised a sacred language which every kind of human mind may use to express its thoughts of God, of Christ and of itself. Our Service Book [1] is mainly made up of this sacred speech. Thus with the help of these Catholic expressions for the religious life, suitable utterance is supplied for both young and old. Old and

[1] The reference is to the Service Book for the Young compiled by Mr. Ireland for use in Gartsherrie Church.

young are, therefore, invited to worship together. Old and young, be it remembered, live together. Before all degrees of intelligence the same universe is outspread.

The feature peculiar to this service for the young is the increased extent to which the worshippers are expected and enabled to take an audible part in the act of worship. If there be objection on the part of some to the order or manner of the service, let it be borne in mind that the true test of its rightness or wrongness will be whether or not we succeed in engaging the mind and spirit of the young in the act of worship.

The attendance of grown up people at this service implies an end which requires for its realisation the presence in the Church of young and old together. Worship of God which is specially fitted for the young and which is at the same time not unsuitable for those of riper years—worship of God in which both are engaged at one time and at one place—is the spiritual atmosphere in which their mutual relationships and obligations and responsibilities are best discovered and most deeply realised. The right thought of God is the necessary antecedent to all other rightness.

It is our earnest hope that worship together of the same God and Father will increasingly reveal the divine sanction for parent and child, teacher

and scholar, strong and weak, experience and inexperience, and will help in the same measure the hearts of young and old to perform their duties the one to the other in the manner that is well-pleasing to Him who has willed that we should be thus related.

The Sunday School

> 'But now 'tis little joy
> To know, I'm farther off from heaven,
> Than when I was a boy.'
>
> Hood.

I

There are two worlds for most of us. They are not this world and *another world*. They are all the while one and the same world; but two different presentations of it. The way in which the world presents itself to a child is the one world; and the other is, the way in which grown-up people present the world to the expanding mind of the child.

It is in reference to the first, viz., the manner in which the world is naturally interpreted by the child-heart, that Jesus, speaking of childhood, says, 'Of such *is* the Kingdom of God.' It is in reference to the other, viz., the world as it comes to be interpreted by the expanding mind and under the influence of the full-grown human life about it, that

Jesus, speaking of men and women, says, 'Except ye be *turned* and become as little children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of God.'

We generally assume that the child has no sufficient impression of the world and of its relation to it, and we make haste to imprint upon its mind our opinions and views. Yet, according to the teaching of Jesus, and also in agreement with the testimony of the poet whose words are quoted above, we actually take something away from the child; we do not, as a rule, add anything to it.

The impressions which the child naturally receives of the world and of its own place in the world have not as yet a literature of their own. The state of the child-heart in sunshine; in dark storm; in thunder; beside the sea; paidlin' in the burn; among the gowans and daisies; with its mother; on its father's knee; in sickness tenderly ministered to; itself looking upon the pain of others; looking up at the stars; coming in to its home for its food; coming for rest and shelter; hearing words of love; thinking of its playmates, and the much else which constitutes the child's world: all is unwritten, and to most people unknown; or, if at all known, is merely smiled at. Yet is the child 'nearer heaven' than our metaphysics, and pride of class, and bitterness of sect, and high-sounding theological dogmas can possibly bring it.

II

If all this be true, of what use is the Sunday School? It is chiefly useful as a corrective. The growing child must see the world through some medium. The ordinary speech and behaviour and opinions of the multitude of people are not nearly so transparent a medium as the first innocence and simplicity of the little child. There is a time in the child's development when it has experience of painful perplexity. At the place where its purity touches and mingles with the turgid river of life, the child stands hesitating, wondering, and afraid. In the days in which the child is being constrained to see God and man and all the world as these are seen and regarded by grown-up people, the free movement of its spirit being checked, the new sensation is bewildering. The child is seeing now with the rest of us, as through a glass, darkly. *Then*, in the day that is now over and past, it saw face to face.

The Church of Christ should know all this, and by its Sunday Schools should make atonement for the falsehood and the darkness which hinder the growing child from seeing aright, as once it saw. What ought to be the character of that agency—with what solicitude should its methods be considered, with what care should selection of suitable instruments be made, what self-dedication and high joy

should be theirs, who are chosen for this work—that agency which is man's solemn endeavour to take from his own sins somewhat at least of their dread power to darken and distort his children's vision of the real and true! Remember that the best of us are scarcely good enough by our words and ways to form a perfect transparency, through which the good may be perceived. We require, all of us, to make reparation to the childhood of our homes. We are taking from them more than we can give them. 'I pray,' says Jesus, 'not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.' It is we who make the evil, which comes in time to contaminate and enthral the innocence of the child. Is the Sunday School, as we know it amongst us, are the Sunday Schools of this land, founded and conducted in the consciousness that we have at an early period interfered disastrously with the movement of the young spirit towards God and truth? Shall we not pay our debts, because, forsooth, our creditors are the 'little ones,' who are powerless to enforce their claims? Rather, where is the thoughtful and well-intentioned man or woman who will refuse to help by that trinity of effort we have been speaking of—the Home, the Children's Service, and the Sunday School—in providing a suitable and efficient antidote to the poison of our sins? Jesus'

saying is more than an injunction; it is an appeal which vibrates with pathetic protest against the disabilities imposed on childhood: '*Suffer* little children to come unto Me, and *forbid* them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God.'

IDEALS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL[1]

I

1. Amiel says: 'To *have* an ideal, or to have *none*: to have *this* ideal or *that*—this is what digs gulfs between men.' The Sunday School has been with us in Scotland for more than a hundred years: yet we are conscious that its efficiency and success continue to lag behind our hopes and desires. Is it not probable that this gulf between expectation and realisation is being dug by wrong ideals, or by the feebleness with which we are maintaining good ones?

In another passage from his *Journal*, Amiel says: 'The ideal, after all, is truer than the real: for the ideal is the eternal element in perishable things; it is the formula in the book of the Creator.' This is a valuable thought. It suggests that there is the closest connection between ideals and God

[1] A paper read before the Presbytery of Hamilton in October 1916.

Himself. Ideals exist because of God. The higher and truer our conception of God, the higher and truer will be our ideals. There are those indeed who hold ideals, and labour for their realisation, in secular education, in politics, in industrialism, and many other great human interests, without any recognition of God. But that does not disprove that worldly ideals testify of God. Ideals are among the 'things of God.' Men are, however, in the habit of taking many of the 'things that are of God,' without acknowledgment. We do well, therefore, if we remember that Ideals are the 'formula of the Creator'; and that His creative work is ceaselessly proceeding. The plans are drafted in accordance with which the actual is ever advancing to fuller life and beauty. The potential utters itself in the ideal, and thus prophesies of the future. The future usefulness and importance of our Sunday Schools, as a means of furthering the religious upbringing of the young, will depend upon the clearness with which high and true ideals are perceived, the strength in which they are held, and the zeal and wisdom in which they are laboured for by the ministers, Sunday School teachers, and members of the Church.

2. The search for ideals and the solemn resolve to labour for their realisation must, however, be preceded and accompanied by faith in God. We

must believe that our love for the children whom we seek to instruct and guide pre-exists in God; and that, infinitely more than we can love them, He loves them, and desires their progress. In the beginning—God. Yes, more than in completions and consummations, God is present in Beginnings. The dawn is more affecting to us—moves us more deeply than the full and perfect day, because it is divinely instinct with illimitable intention and promise of good. The poet more often chooses the Spring-time for his theme than the time of ingathering. Jesus with the little children in His arms emblemises the eternal attitude of God the Heavenly Father to human beginnings. Children are specially dear to God. For wrapped up in the child are all the possibilities of the man. There, in germ, is the Hero, the Philosopher, the Saint. The immortal love of Heaven broods over those human beginnings, waiting for their gradual unfolding and ultimate manifestation as children of God.

If we have faith in God as the Father and Friend of the children, we shall not require to grope about for Sunday School ideals. They will arise before our cleansed vision. They will come to us.

3. The first to appear will be the Ideal Child. This is he that we must habituate ourselves to meet in the Sunday School, for the ideal child is in every one of our children. We are not asked to believe

that the actual child is already good. Nor may we suffer ourselves to believe that he is already bad. The ideal child is not the charming creation of the painter's brush. Nor is he the spoilt darling of a doting affectionateness. Neither is the actual child to be thought of as born under the curse of God—hostile by nature to all goodness and truth, and an heir of wrath. We must have faith in the child as especially fitted by nature for religion, as capable of knowing and loving the good, and the true, as created for knowledge, wisdom, piety and disinterested love. This is the ideal child. We ought to feel that the ideal child is the supreme justification of the Sunday School. Nay more, we ought to feel that the ideal child is the supreme justification of the Universe. The whole creation exists that it may minister to the gradual unfolding of the faculties, affections and powers of a moral and spiritual being. The Sunday School must become conscious that it is engaged in the endeavour to furnish this planet with an appropriate soul. To this end we must have faith in the child. Unlike in this respect to other systems of Christian theology Calvinism has overlooked the Jesus thought, that His 'little ones' have each his guardian angel who in Heaven always beholds the face of the Father who is in Heaven. This omission has for long deprived us of the ideal child. The Church must

be better than its creed. It must assume and exercise through its Sunday Schools a wise and affectionate guardianship over the highest welfare of its children. The Church must see and acknowledge and enter into loving and expectant relations with the Ideal Child.

4. Another thing we must believe is, that the Christian religion is specially suited to awaken the soul of the child, and to excite and cherish in him spiritual life. Christianity has its roots in the primitive and universal principles of our nature. This explains why it furnishes matter of inexhaustible speculation for the mightiest intellects, whilst at the same time it is rich in instructions, and visions, and promptings, suited to the mind of the growing child. Christianity reveals God as a Father; and the child's earliest affection, and his first sense of duty arise out of his filial relation. There is thus an element of piety, a motion towards God in the first spontaneous impulses of the child. Christianity makes large use of the Heavens; its moral superlative is the heavenly, and it speaks of a better world beyond the stars. It speaks also of a Heavenly Kingdom that is within us, and is the 'promise and potency' of a kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world. And in many ways and forms, by precept and by parable, it depicts or suggests the duties, the privileges, the responsi-

bilities of citizenship in this Kingdom of God. But withal, Christianity does not so much teach by assertions and rules, as by the presentation of the scenes and incidents in the life of Jesus. Jesus is the Christian religion, and it is chiefly by observing Jesus in the everyday events of his earthly life that we are enabled to gather and put together the elements of His majestic character. The story of Jesus is the peculiar heritage of the child. Whatever we may withhold from him, we must give him *that*, and encourage him to make it his very own. And giving him that, we give him all; for to see Jesus is to see the Father. Would we teach the child to know and reciprocate the love of the Father in Heaven? How shall we better attain our end than by leading him into the presence of Jesus, as He folds the little ones in His arms and blesses them? Do we wish to impress the child with the thought of a life that even death cannot quench, and to let his soul 'have sight of that immortal sea which brought us hither?' Can we do better than take him with us to the empty grave near Calvary, and let *that* speak to him of the Conqueror of death? Do we desire to inform the child about the risen Saviour, whither He is gone and what He is doing? What better shall we do than make a large use of the Heavens, and say, Jesus is *there*, and He is kinder to us than the

sun, for He shines upon our souls with the light of life. The child will understand us if he already knows the story of Jesus. For he has long felt that Jesus was bound to ascend at last, far above the tinsel glory of the Herod who mocked Him and the Pilate who crucified Him. It is because Christianity lives and moves and speaks and acts in narratives and facts, that it is peculiarly adapted to the imagination and heart of childhood. We must have an unbounded faith in the sufficiency of our religion to the great objects of the Sunday School.

II

1. We ask now what those objects are. What is it that we desire and hope to do by means of our Sunday Schools? It is essential to success that we should know what we are to work for. What then is the great end, the ideal purpose, of the Sunday School? It is to reach and awaken the soul of the child and to bring it into vigorous action on religious and moral truth. Our aim is to call forth and build up inward and spiritual life in the child. We must remember that we are not dealing with unthinking matter. We are not making a machine. We are not chiselling an effigy. We are not shaping plastic material in a mould. The child is a living, thinking being, designed to act from himself and upon him-

self. He is to form himself. He is to distinguish for himself between good and evil, truth and falsehood, the clean and the unclean. He is to be the author of his own character. It rests with him to determine his future being. It is in order that our children may have life, and more abundant life, that we carry on our Sunday Schools. The germs of great moral and religious truths are already in the soul of the child. Our aim should be to create an atmosphere, and supply conditions favourable to the coming forth in the form of living powers, of those germs of reason and of conscience. But who is sufficient for these things? Is the Sunday School sufficient? Were our aim merely to convene a number of children and to keep some kind of discipline among them for an hour, while we are attempting to stamp our minds upon them and to make them see with our eyes; were our purpose merely to load their memories with Bible knowledge—the number and nature of the plagues of Egypt; the names of the Judges in correct sequence; the names of the Kings of Israel and Judah, with dates if possible; the miracles of Jesus in the exact order of their occurrence; the places visited by St. Paul in his missionary journeys —if this were the aim of our Sunday Schools then we need not greatly concern ourselves about our sufficiency for the task. Almost anybody will do for work like that. The true aim of a Sunday School—

its ideal object—being to awaken spiritual life in the child, mechanical methods are useless. Their tendency has always been to extinguish life in the human soul.

2. If our Sunday School system cannot rise above such an end or aim as can be adequately served by mechanical methods, it will be chargeable with causing His 'little ones' to stumble, and it will deserve that a millstone be put about its neck, and that it be cast into the depths of the sea. It is the continuance and the prevalence of mechanical methods in our Sunday Schools, which chiefly threaten their usefulness. For what is the explanation of the gaps we are constantly deploring—the gap between the Sunday School and the Bible Class, and between the Bible Class and membership of the Church? The ships we build on the slips invariably reach the sea. The engines we construct in the workshops invariably reach the main line. Why does not the child move on and up through all the stages of soul-development without halt or backset? Because the child has been subjected to mechanical methods, and has no life in himself. We must never forget that the child entrusted to us is a free moral agent, and that the true end, the ideal object of the Sunday School is to develop such a being.

It ought to be both instructive and admonitory

for us to discover in the present-day state of religion in our churches the effects of mechanical methods of teaching in past years in our Sunday Schools. It is not that our people disbelieve Christianity, but that Christian truth lies dead within them. Their man-power for social uplift, missionary enterprise, philanthropy, the purification of trade and politics, the rational adjustment of international differences, is not nearly commensurate with their numerical strength. It is only a few, comparatively, who have the will and the power to take up great tasks. And the explanation is that in early life religion was lodged in their memories, and in their unthinking belief, and did not awake their reason, or their conscience, or the sensibilities of their soul.

The question, What should we teach in our Sunday Schools, I have, indirectly, answered under the heading of the 'fitness of our religion for the teaching of spiritual life in the young.' Some people have said that the Scotland of bygone days owed its piety and its virtues to the Shorter Catechism. I shall not combat that assertion. What I believe is that a Catechism having no life in itself cannot give life to any one. Let us not trust to Catechisms and systems of theology. Let us teach the children Christ. And in teaching them Christ let us aim at enabling them to see for themselves

how the Christian religion proceeded from Him, a religion whose distinctive features are the very features of His own great soul—Spirituality, Disinterestedness, and Infinity of Prospect. How to teach Christ? That, too, is determined whensoever we have ourselves come to know Christ and to love Him, and to know and love the child. Teachers might well convene from time to time, not so much to be taught what they are to teach, as to inquire *how* they are to teach.

For whatever success they are achieving, our Sunday Schools must continue to be indebted to their teachers. The ultimate triumph of the system must await the evolution in more generous abundance of the Ideal Teacher. The most gifted of our congregations cannot find a worthier field of labour. These will doubtless come to our aid when their love to Christ is greater, and when they love the children more. Meanwhile we respectfully salute even the humblest fellow-labourer in this cause. He will never win the kind of recognition which comes to many forms of world-greatness and success, but if he has been able to impart God's truth to one human soul, his work will outlive empires and the stars.

CHILDREN AND THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

'Baptism is, I may say, the first step which manifesteth the purpose of the Godhead, to regenerate the fallen creature, and to raise it at length into the fellowship of the exaltation of Christ.'—Edward Irving.

I

Protestants, who are observant, will often have remarked upon the introduction to their public worship of usages which had long been absent from the public worship of the Protestant sects. Some people have called the re-appearance of these usages 'a return to Romanism.' The fact is, that certain usages were retained for many years by the Reformed Churches, and were only lost in the Protectorate of Cromwell. Ordinary history books do not tell us how far public worship was affected by the Reformation; nor how far and in what respects the public worship of the Reformed Church was modified by Cromwell. It therefore very naturally happens that usages which some people call Roman Catholic, had actually been continued by the Reformed Churches until they were forcibly discontinued by the Protector and his soldiers. One usage of great value known as Confirmation was taken or lapsed from the Church of Scotland, but is still retained by other great Protestant Churches.

We are beginning now to feel our loss acutely. Protestant Scotland is feeling great difficulty in bridging the period between the older classes in the Sunday School and the Church. Even Bible Classes and Guilds are not doing more than feebly helping to meet the difficulty. It would seem to be absolutely necessary that we should recover the usage by which in olden times the children of members of the Church were brought into full membership at an early age.

The Roman Church and the great Protestant Churches adhere to the usage of preparing the children of their faithful members for Holy Communion from the age of fourteen years or even earlier. The Presbytery of Hamilton think that this step should not be delayed beyond the age of seventeen years. It may be of no practical value at the present time to recall the fact that in the Primitive Church the sacred elements were given to children, and even to infants. Nevertheless the fact points to an understanding of the great sacrament which we do not have, and which most likely has never been presented to us. The crude thinker who objects to Infant Baptism on the ground that children cannot give intellectual consent to their own Baptism, would have even more to say against infant participation in the Lord's Supper. But there are views of the Sacraments and of the rela-

tion to them of the family of mankind, which far transcend the literalism and unimaginativeness of such an objector. That view of the Sacraments it should long ago have been the business of the Church to expound to its members and to the children of members. Had the Church done so, it would not have suffered as it undoubtedly has done, from the difficulty of dovetailing one generation into another in the profession and practice of the Christian Faith.

II

Human life does not begin by the intellectual consent of the individual. Children do not choose their parents : nor do they elect to become living creatures : nor, when they are born, can they select the conditions of life in which they shall be reared. We vaccinate children : but they have not previously consented to it, that it is for their good. We compel children to submit to a long course of school life : but they have not asked for it : nor do they perceive that it is for their advantage. The child does not believe in the medicine it is compelled to swallow. Are the cleanliness and suitable clothing of some children, and the dirt and raggedness of others, matters which have previously been submitted to their intelligence ; and have they made a free choice ? Environment is at least a factor in

determining the character of the child ; but what child is in a position to select its own environment ? What shall we think, then, of the intelligence of the person who objects to Christian Baptism on the ground that the child has not previously given its consent ? Baptism is a summary of the Christian parents' belief regarding the whole nature of the child which has been given them, and of its prospects for time and for eternity. It is not compulsory, as those things are to which we have just referred. If it were made compulsory it would have no efficacy. It is the way in which people, when at their best, are able to regard the momentous beginning of a human career. Christian Baptism holds within it a hope and a promise for the childhood of humanity far in advance of anything we yet see in general operation. 'Suffer little children to come unto me,' is the most affecting protest that has ever been made against the refusal to give child life the best possible start in its career—physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual. It is also the most touching appeal that can be addressed to the heart of humanity, beseeching it to put its mature wisdom and strength at the service of its offspring during the years of their unreason and helplessness.

Christian Baptism is the charter of childhood. That is why we believe in infant baptism. The same reasons and the same view of the matter urge

us to the belief that the earlier the child is brought to understand its individual relation to that divine order which Jesus has taught us, the better for the child, and the better for the world. The after action of each individual is determined by the teachings, examples, beliefs, ideals, and other special conditions of his upbringing. Participation in Holy Communion by young people implies at least that they have become conscious of the great negatives—the things which they must hate and shun: and conscious likewise of the great affirmatives—the things they must honour and revere. Who is there who does not acknowledge that there is nothing whether of the home, or of the state, or of human society, which may more appropriately intervene when a child is born, than Baptism, which affirms the worth of the human being; and afterwards when it is no longer a child, Holy Communion which opens to it spiritual fellowship with the whole family of God?

THE CALL OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

'He calleth His own sheep by name and leadeth them out.'—John x. 3.

The relation of an individual to the Church of Christ begins much earlier than that stage or condition in which he is described as being distinctly

conscious of religious influence, and in which he voluntarily yields himself to spiritual guidance. 'The sheep hear His voice and follow Him'; yes, but the Good Shepherd has had to do with the sheep long before they were capable of intelligent response to His care and effort. Elsewhere we learn: 'He shall gather the lambs in His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that give suck' (Is. xl. 11, R.V.). Capabilities and tendencies of all kinds—moral, intellectual, and physical—must be referred for a full explanation of them to a remote past. In the very remotest past is God. He has never been other than the Good Shepherd. We have derived our life from those who were the 'Sheep of His hand'; and our fathers' fathers to times most distant were the objects of a heavenly care. By parents and teachers and by the tenderness to childhood of all right life in man and woman, the Good Shepherd 'gathers the lambs in His arm and carries them in His bosom.'

There are surely many young people who have had the advantage of a home life, example and discipline, such as may reasonably be expected to have developed within them a high capacity for goodness. With the forthputting of Divine or of human energy, expectation is invariably conjoined. He that carries the lambs expects that by and by they will hear His voice and follow Him.

The one anxiety of the youth of our Christian homes should be, not unduly to delay that individual response, strong and generous, to all the gracious influences of their upbringing, which rewards the best and tenderest of earthly solicitudes, and satisfies the yearnings of the Infinite Love.

To 'hear' and to 'follow' are terms which describe that relation to God and life and duty which is not first nor last, but intermediate. All life is bound in one harmonious whole. Right nurture unfolds into the blossom of right willing and right doing. These become in time the upright man. And the last of life is that for which the first is made.

Now, there are many people that ought to be members of the Church who still remain mere adherents. The commonest excuse they give is that they are not worthy to be members. Are they not worthy to be His sheep, who were once His lambs? Why should the question of worthiness obtrude itself at all? It does not belong either of right or of fact to the human aspect of membership of the Church. He, whose showers refresh the green corn blade, causes the same herb in after time to stand tall and strong, bearing, in the light of autumn suns, the food of men. 'First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.' Each stage a wonder. Doubtless the last is best; but the first holds all.

None in youth or fuller life can say that he is not called to better things, seeing that once he was born of a woman, and was for years a child. In all the love that waited upon our helplessness with food and shelter, and upon our moral growth with counsel, example, and restraint, there is to be heard the voice of God declaring that it is His will that, through the agency of things so weak as men, there shall abound to His praise and glory a great fruitage of right thought and deed. Entrance into this Divine order of progressive goodness is given us at our mortal birth. 'He gathers the lambs in His arm and carries them in His bosom.' When in after years we come to be conscious of this Divine order, and to desire and resolve to abide therein, then are we 'born again.' 'His sheep hear His voice and follow Him.' This is membership of the Church in its only true sense. Still, there may be hesitancy, disobedience, and doubt. The last consciousness, however, will correspond with the Divine fact—'No one is able to pluck them out of My hand.'

THE GREAT TRANSFERENCE

'When my father and mother forsook me, the Lord took me up.'—Ps. xxvii. 10 (R.V.).

This is the language of one who understands himself; appreciating thoroughly the efficiency of the

parental relationship, and at the same time perceiving its limitations. There is a period in the life of the human being when the love and care of parents fully supplement the weakness and ignorance of the child; but there comes another period when the utmost of parental solicitude becomes ineffective for purposes of aid, support, and comfort. It is not necessary to suppose that the writer of these words had lost his parents either by their desertion of him or by their death. They 'forsook him,' indeed, but only in the sense in which all adult life finds itself forsaken. There comes a time to every one of us when we know that those who from the first 'took us up' and 'carried us' along, have 'set us down.' There need be no change in them. They need not be dead. Whether alive or dead they love us still. But they have reached the limit of their powers, they cannot continue to 'carry us' so they must needs 'set us down.' So far the experience of all of us is the same. We have all been 'taken up' and 'carried' and 'set down.' The next period is that to which, alas! the experience of many differs from that of the Psalmist. We cannot all say 'The Lord took us up.' Some of us do not know of anything in our maturer life which we could honestly describe by the expression 'the Lord took me up.' One thing you may have noticed, and that is that they who feel most deeply,

most gratefully, the privilege and blessedness of having been 'taken up' and 'carried' of dear human love, those who realise most vividly the fact when it comes, that at length they are 'set down' for ever of the strength which has hitherto upborne them, are likewise those who find themselves in the attitude and with the readiness to be 'taken up' of the Lord. In truth man is always a child; that is, he is always *little* in contrast with the universe and the problems of life. He is always in need of being 'taken up' and 'carried.' If he lives long enough, he is sure to be 'forsaken' by his father and his mother just as the railway train gives over to the ship those who would reach the over-sea lands. The religion of Jesus is a religion for men. It is true that Jesus carries a child in His arms, while He speaks to adult human life, but this religion is not a provision for childhood but for strenuous manhood and womanhood. Parents ought to be enough for little children. Religion is for those who are 'forsaken' of their father and their mother. The act of transference is full of beauty, both on the side of the parents and of their children. That the Lord has taken their children up is the finest imaginable fruition of the long years during which parents have tended and upborne their offspring. It is also the consolation on having to 'set them down.' Young people should be looking

for that experience which the Psalmist speaks of in the words 'the Lord took me up'; and they are invited to believe that the act of communion is the best way of symbolising the conscious transference of their young life from the dear human agents of the Lord to the Lord Himself.

THE TWO STAGES

'Howbeit that was not first which is Spiritual, but that which is Natural, and afterward that which is Spiritual.'—1 Cor. xv. 46.

I

The choice of text at the head of this Paper explains in a general way my position towards Church membership. I hold it to be part of a natural and necessary order or sequence. It is not to be thought of as something strange and unnatural or supernatural.

No apology is due from youth to youth or from youth to age in respect of joining the Church: for all the unreason, all the strangeness and unnaturalness, are with those who do not timeously take that step.

The duty of each human being is to join himself to the universe. It is his duty to join his whole nature to the whole universe. Not a part to a part.

Not alone the body to food and raiment, but the intellect also and the spirit to their appropriate counterpart.

When in accordance with the command of Jesus we baptize children into His name, we intimate our acceptance of His teaching regarding human nature.

The act of baptism is our formal acknowledgment of the fitness of the young of the human race to fill their place in the universe to the full according to the divine intention.

When we use the words ' Of such is the kingdom of God,' we mean that compliance with a discoverable divine order and rule is the programme of the natural development of the human creature. Now, in this development there are several stages more or less clearly marked off from one another. It is a mistake to speak of those stages as being occupied voluntarily. Man is under law. He must obey the law of his being.

It is equally a mistake to involve these natural and necessary stages in mystery. They are mysterious, but only in the sense in which we and all else besides are set and framed in mystery.

We are dealing here with two of those stages, and we say about them that they are natural and necessary as part of the conscious movement of the human being into full communion with the universe.

Man is body and soul. The universe likewise is material and spiritual. To fit the body to the material universe is the first necessity of the human being. To fit the soul to the spiritual is the second necessity.

To affect to regard these duties as optional is to invite the fate of the self-destroyed. We cannot choose but be ; we cannot choose but be, according to the will of God.

The youth who goes forth day by day learning to work, is preparing to fulfil his part of the great contract whereby in exchange for his labour the universe undertakes to nourish and sustain his body.

The youth who joins the Church is in like manner moving reasonably and naturally into that spiritual communion with the universe which is necessary for the health and vigour of his soul. The first is physical, the second spiritual, but both are natural. They are in accordance with Christ's view of human nature. They are both acts of obedience to the rule and order of God's kingdom, and of that kingdom it is man's high distinction that he is made capable of becoming a loyal and happy subject.

II

We say that to become part of the Church, to become consciously and heartily one in the world-

wide society of the thoughtful, is *natural*. We look for it, we expect it, we are entitled to demand it, of every one.

It is natural because the objects and the methods of such a society are strictly in agreement with the model of an underlying Nature to which the youth has already conformed. A child delights to trace on a semi-transparent medium the outline of some figure which lies beneath the medium. Matter to be manipulated; instruction to be sought as to the right method of handling; labour to be expended upon the material, according to knowledge gradually acquired; the product or better thing to be looked for as the end or purpose of labour—these already lie visible beneath the hand of the working lad. To join the Church is to begin to trace upon these a habit of life, similar indeed, but upon a higher plane.

The things which are invisible and eternal thus come to be seen and realised by the help of the visible and transient. They will be found to correspond each to each.

The *first* is something to work upon, some form of matter, be it earth, or stone, or wood, or iron, to draw near to with intent to constrain it to some purpose of utility or of beauty. This is the visible. The invisible, as yet, is one's self—the unknown and immeasurable capacity for moral goodness in each one. This is what is to be handled.

The *second* thing is instruction. The teacher of the handicraft is found in the place where such craft is carried on. Is it coal you would learn to dig ? Your teacher is at the coal pit. Is it wood you desire to gain knowledge of ? Your teacher is in the joiner's yard. Is it iron in one or other of its many forms ? You are in no danger of going astray in search of the teacher to whom you must bind yourself for a period of years before you are exalted to the position of a journeyman worker.

Now, in our day, and in our land, there is but one Competent Instructor in all that pertains to one's self. As St. Peter said long ago, so say we here and now, ' To whom shall we go but unto Thee, Thou hast the words of eternal life.' To join the Church is, then, to admit the claim of Jesus to be our all-sufficient instructor. The subject-matter with which He deals is each one's self—what we are in virtue of the human nature in which we have a share.

The *third* thing implied in joining the Church is the desire to work upon this self. The lad is now working upon wood or iron, or upon some other material. He is convinced that these forms of matter require and deserve that work should be put upon them. This experience starts the inquiry —what am I ? Jesus tells him. Then he is convinced that work should be wrought upon himself,

that the exceeding worth of his own nature requires and deserves to be treated with a steadfast endeavour, laborious and instructed.

The *last* of common labour is the issue, that which finally goes forth from the hand of the honest, skilful worker. It justifies the toil. All the weariness, as well as all the power and all the knowledge, lie now at rest together in the perfect product.

For a lad to join the Church it is desirable that he should, however dimly, perceive a pattern, to become like which, inspires all labour upon himself.

Some wondrous things are wrought in stone. There are likewise marvels in iron. Skilled workers in gold and silver confuse our senses with the magic-like results of their craftsmanship. All these, the most wonderful of them, do not eclipse a yet more wonderful. They are really eager indicators of a best which is beyond their sphere, because far above it. They point to the *good man*, and they say, 'O workers in stone or wood, or gold, or silver, if ye would but work upon *yourselves* as ye work upon us, ye might all be *good*, and beyond the goodness which man may inwardly possess and outwardly show forth, there is no brighter radiance anywhere nor is there anything more fair.'

NATURAL AND SACRED SEASONS

HOLY DAYS AND HOLIDAYS

'Sabbathless Satan!'—Charles Lamb.

Holidays were originally Holy Days, and holy means perfect. Holy Days were therefore periods of time which men gave to the contemplation and worship of the Perfect. Now and again, in far-off times, men would abstain from the hunt, or from work upon their plots of ground, in order that they might gratify their sense of the wonderful and beautiful and beneficent. They felt that they could not do this freely and fully while they were engaged in their ordinary labours. They, therefore, by common consent, fixed upon certain days throughout the year—days which were closely associated with special experiences of the beautiful or wonderful or beneficent—and on these days they gave themselves over to the frame of mind suitable to the day. They did this in obedience to the Religious Instinct. Doubtless they found such days refreshing and helpful. They became strongly attached to the due observance of them.

The traditions of the past would still further sanctify the custom. There is evidence that in

very remote times freedom to withhold labour on these days was strenuously insisted upon. Even subjugated peoples could not be moved from their determination to hold their ancient Holy Days. It has been conjectured, and not without strong probability, that Sunday, that old *one day in seven* for rest and worship, was first won by the workers of some long-vanished civilisation after a great struggle. Freedom from toil, that a man might be rightly situated for receiving the great impressions of the universe, was, from days infinitely remote from our own, the rallying cry of the myriad toilers in their conflicts with the greed and oppression of competitive commercialism. The contest between Pharaoh and the enslaved Israelites may be cited in illustration. In the book of Exodus, the fifth chapter we read: 'And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a Feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God; lest He fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword. And the King of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do

ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? Get you unto your burdens.'

These Israelites, though slaves, were claiming Holy Days. And holidays are still Holy Days, except to the utterly carnal, supposing there be any such. For who does not feel, that being relieved from daily toil for a brief space, there is an upward bound of moral and spiritual faculty. The world of God finds in us an open door, in holiday time, and pours in upon us as at no other time. Then it is that sounds and sights, of which the place of toil is altogether bereft, get their way to the inner deeps of us, and stir those emotions which ancestral man so highly prized. True, there were those in far-off times who failed to keep Holy Days in the right spirit. These are doubtless the progenitors of all those who remain ignorant of the fact that Holidays were originally Holy Days, and that they might still be so.

THE RIVAL DAYS

'Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip?—John xiv. 9 (R.V.).

The Rival Days are Christmas Day and New Year's Day. To some people the first is the greater, and the second being to them a mere Pagan Anniversary,

by far the less. To others the second is the greater, and the other receives scant recognition. It appears to me that both days are important. Both signalise and announce facts of the greatest moment to mankind. Christmas Day heralds a spiritual fact and New Year's Day heralds a physical fact. The universe, as we know, presents itself to us invariably, and in all details of its phenomena, in two aspects, the physical and spiritual. It has ever been the characteristic of the human being that he has, more or less, been able to regard the universe in these two aspects.

The Christian is supposed to be specially capable of appreciating the spiritual aspect of the universe. He would naturally put Christmas Day first. But the Christian does not permit himself to undervalue the physical aspect of the universe. If he were to do so he would soon weaken his faculty for appreciating the spiritual. He therefore makes New Year's Day not so much a second and competing anniversary as the physical counterpart of the spiritual fact which Christmas Day declares. And the spiritual truth which we are invited to associate with Christmas Day is that Something, inexpressibly great and worthy, is being wrought out on this planet. The kind of man with whom God is 'well pleased' has been exhibited to the mind and conscience of humanity. We know whereunto we

are intended to grow. That is the greatest blessing we could receive—just to have some idea of what we shall be. Such knowledge motives all life's activities, and gives values to all life's attainments.

Now every process, whether it be of labour, or of growth, requires time. And New Year's Day follows close upon Christmas Day with the reminder that time is being given us. The two days need not be competitors and rivals. Together, they form one great truth. The one is incomplete without the other. The New Year is the physical fact which corresponds with the spiritual fact which Christmas declares. For believers in the spiritual purpose of the universe it is well that the Spiritual Day should reach them first; and afterwards the physical. It is well, too, that they should come close to one another. Our fresh impressions of the Incarnation are carried at once into the new untainted year. Christmas proclaims the purpose for which time is given; and immediately Time is born anew. It is well, it is best, that it is as it is. The two make one; they are not rivals. They are each the complement and completion of the other.

CHRISTMAS

'Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father and it sufficeth us.'—John xiv. 8.

It would amount to a great deal, if we could say that Philip voiced the thought of universal mankind, when he declared, that the conviction that our lives are ruled by Divine fatherliness is enough in itself, to make us patient, peaceful, and happy. Yet there are very many who are ready to say with him, that such a conviction would abundantly suffice them. Nay more, there are many who, more or less confidently and steadfastly, do actually feel that they possess this conviction. Christmas fulfils, therefore, two important purposes. It brings closely to the hearts of believers the ground of their conviction, and it asks afresh of all men, What would satisfy your souls? We need say little of the first purpose which Christmas serves, except to remind you that Christmas joy issues specially from those who have reached, through Jesus, the conviction that the supreme rule of the world is fatherly. Every reminder of Him who has shown them the Father is grateful to believers. This annual presentation to their minds and hearts of the Child Jesus is peculiarly gladdening, because it invites them to look anew at the wonderful

beginnings of an instrumentality which has proved itself to be the power and wisdom of God unto salvation.

This leads us directly to speak of the second great purpose which Christmas serves. Christmas asks men, What would satisfy your souls? And in asking men this question, Christmas would further say—Consider carefully if you are not already in the line of God's great purpose of good towards mankind, inasmuch as you have often said, Show us the Father and it sufficeth us. Quite a number of people have got this length. They know what would satisfy them, but they have an idea that nothing has been done to give them satisfaction. So thought Philip. That Apostle had failed to perceive to what end Jesus had been living upon the earth. Philip had not hitherto recognised that so mighty a thing as 'showing men the Father' had been proceeding day by day during all the time that Jesus had been with them. And yet, when we come to think of it, how else or otherwise could God the Father show Himself to the hearts and consciences of men! Remember it is a question of *showing men the Father*. How else, I say, could the Father reveal Himself, seeing that His essential attributes are holiness and love, than by a life which exhibited these moral perfections. It had been otherwise if the essence of God had consisted

in power. Then Philip might well have said, We have waited for a splendid appearance of Divine power, but we have not yet seen it. And all the time Jesus had been manifesting the Father in the only way in which He could be manifested. 'He that hath seen Me,' said Jesus, 'hath seen the Father.' Christmas will say when it comes, 'Oh, men, it is even so; the thing you desire has been given you; you would see the Father; you need not look for a sign from Heaven; the Father hath revealed Himself in the words and deeds of the Man, Christ Jesus.'

THE NEW YEAR

'For this is the will of God, even your sanctification.'—1 Thess. iv. 3.

We have passed the day of the winter solstice. Now the sun has ceased to move away from us. He is coming towards us. He will shine more and more until the perfect day. It is thus that we have a New Year.

This regularly recurring heavenly movement is made the measure of man's earthly life. But it is the sense of renewal which affects him morally. It is the same on a smaller scale with the orderly succession of day and night. The descending dark-

ness suggests ending, or pause at least. The new day seems to invite forth only the approved purpose, and the well-considered act. Each day we hail one the other with 'Good morning,' or 'Good day.' Our salutation assumes that all discern the moral significance of fresh occasion, new opportunity. The closing year is the curtain falling upon a large aggregate of deeds and of experiences. The new year is like a greater new day; and by as much as it is greater than a day does its renewal impress the imagination and the spiritual sense of man.

'To-morrow is a new day.' Thus do we often bring even to finality, in thought at least, and by the power of hope, the pain we are enduring, the weakness or the sin that have made us to stumble, the disaster which threatens to crush us. And not unfrequently the dawn has brought us release, and strength, and comfort with its light. We have become as new creatures with the day's renewal. 'A Happy New Year,' is a great good wish. It means for the sorrowful the closing in kind oblivion of a vast retrospect of anguish, and the opening of a tearless way which leads afar through pleasant scenes. It means for past failure the blotting out of the record of defeat, and the stir and motion of fresh endeavour. It means, for last year's sins and shortcoming, the announcement

that the Angel of Records has turned the leaf, and the life-story of the greatest sinner begins anew upon a stainless page.

Thus wonderfully days and years seem to adapt themselves to our human modes of thought, as from a kind of knowledge of us, and by a kind of sympathy with us. And yet in truth they know us not, nor have they any thought of us. They are unconscious servants of Him who makes all things work for our good.

The heart of the season's message of peace and hope and happiness is that abiding will or wish of God, even our sanctification.

The Heavens declare His glory; the new year vocalises His wish. His wish is that we may achieve goodness. Let me wish you His wish; then shall I have wished you 'A Happy New Year.'

GOOD FRIDAY

'That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.'—Phil. iii. 10.

I

I DO not desire to urge the Good Friday service unduly, far less do I desire to advertise it. I prefer to wait until such a service becomes for the faithful

a sacred duty and a spiritual necessity. I understand the difficulty which even good Christian people have in turning their thoughts from the interests of daily life to a subject so tragic and so intimately related to the deepest founts of religious feeling. We are not yet far advanced in the use of contemplation as 'a means of grace.' It may be that we are declining in this respect. Nevertheless, as our hold of great principles, and our perception of great truths, depends so largely upon the habit of contemplation, we are sure, sooner or later, to have resort to it to rescue ourselves from moral and spiritual insensibility. It is characteristic of many people that they do not live continuously in any high sense. They have large spaces in their life which are quite empty of worthy forms of consciousness. The habit of contemplation would remedy this. Contemplation is not brooding. It is the deliberate and instructed endeavour of the soul to extract and convey to itself the inner reality of some important fact.

How few of us have extracted and conveyed to ourselves the inner reality of the sufferings of Christ! St. Paul illustrates the matter grandly. He came by contemplation to *suffer* with Christ, to *die* with Christ, to *rise* with Christ, and to *reign* with Christ. Through contemplation he, in a sense, identified himself with Christ. There is with most

of us a separating hiatus between us and Christ—a great gulf fixed. We consent to listen periodically to something about Christ. We, more or less reluctantly, agree upon occasion to do something for Christ. But we are not habitually one with Christ. Only contemplation can draw us into Christ, or Christ into us. Only contemplation can bring to pass that the mind that was in Christ Jesus should likewise dwell in us. Meanwhile this great instrument of our transformation is too little understood and too little used. It is a true saying that we 'know not what we shall be'; it is nearly as true that we know not what we might be with the aid of contemplation.

II

As time rolls on the tragedy of Golgotha becomes more, instead of less impressive. The Person who perished there has found a place in so many hearts. He has been so liberally nourished by the love and veneration of humanity. He is so actual to the best life of our race that His crucifixion has come to appear a world event; it stands for something which has to do with illimitable results. It is peculiarly suitable that we should yield ourselves to meditation upon the death of Jesus upon the recurrence of the day upon which He died. There are few things which yield us their meaning upon a

casual glance. Interpretations of Calvary have followed one another through all the centuries which have gone past since He was crucified. Who shall say that we have reached the final interpretation? Imperfect conceptions of the import of Calvary tend to give way to truer conceptions of that event, just as men advance in spiritual experience and in spiritual insight. The individual Christian ought himself to 'go to Calvary' instead of blindly serving himself heir to the interpretations of the past. Time was when learned men wrote to prove that the death of Christ was a price paid to the devil for the emancipation of mankind. A later theory saw in it a bargain with God, whereby so much suffering was offered to cancel so much guilt. Other theories spoke of 'appeasing the anger of God,' or 'satisfying the justice of God.'

What then does the Cross of Jesus really stand for? Have we reached the Divine reality which is hidden in it? How shall we hope to reach it? Let individual Christians think at suitable times of the great event. Let them meditate upon it. It is almost certain to be the case, that we know the power of the Cross of Jesus in exact proportion to the effort we have made to know it. Meanwhile the pious thinker is preparing for a future age interpretations of Calvary which are unknown to us. Interpretations come and go, but the Cross itself remains

to quicken for ever the soul and conscience of the race to yet profounder and worthier conceptions of God and man and God in man.

AN EASTER THOUGHT

'He is not here, but is risen.'—Luke xxiv. 6.

Nothing, then, is final. In both directions there is space for endless change. The character of the next experience is fixed by that which precedes it. It may not be like it in mere appearance; but we are sure it is akin to it, and follows upon it in its place, according to a natural order.

Ungodliness beams with a self-satisfied smile; folly awakes echoes with its laughter; worldliness leans upon its house while it counts the treasure it has hoarded there. Self-sacrifice lies dead in its grave. But none of these is final. Least of all is that final which it has befallen Love to be—dead.

When some day you come upon wailing and gnashing of teeth, you are sure it is the successor of the state that boasted its self-sufficiency but a little while ago.

He who is now weeping despairingly over the bowl that is broken, is the same who laughed as he drank it to the dregs.

The man you help to extricate from the ruins

of a worldly estate, or to comfort in his closing days at the disappointment of all earthly hope, is he whom you have heard say to his soul, 'I have much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.'

When the women who waited upon the Lord went to see the last, as they supposed, of Love that had died for them, they found that here too there was no abiding.

They will hang a garland upon the goal He has reached, though He cannot with dead hand take it down to wear it. He has come to the last—corruption. They will protest with their sweet-scented spices. It is useless, 'He is not here, but is risen.'

Oh, brethren, if we are but sure of the direction of our spirit's movement and endeavour, there is no need to fear the next.

In the downward way the *next* is always awful. In neither direction is there any lasting pause. It was on the third day that He rose again.

ALL SAINTS' DAY

'Hurt not the earth, neither the sea . . . till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.'—Rev. vii. 3.

There is a time when we are prone to exaggerate our own value. That time is usually before we

have lived many years. When we are just coming into actual life then it is that we are likely to discover in ourself an important person.

This is the result chiefly of a confused vision. It results also from a new and perfectly just vision. The thing that is clearly seen, and the things which are not clearly seen, produce the inflated self.

The truth in this is self, the discovery that we are each of us a separate entity. The untruth lies in the failure to recognise the much which assisted to make up this self, and without which it would be so little.

When the youth springs up in the consciousness that he is distinct from all that has hitherto encompassed him—the world, parents, home, teachers, and friends—he receives for the first time his mysterious birthright, the right to an individual existence, the right to be a person.

He will now mistake himself, the newly created being, for a creator.

He will regard all those who had to do with him as his creatures. What were they but ministering agents towards this great result—himself.

By and by, when he has suffered loss, or when he has caused suffering, his perceptions are corrected. He finds that while self is real and noble, selfishness is ignoble and a lie. As he grows older he is certain that his real measure and extent of being

embraces other beings ; his joys are never his own joys, nor his sorrows limited to what brings him pain.

The old man who has outlived parents and children, and friends and comrades, still clings to his imperishable identity,—his true self—but in his inward meditations he learns how small is self, now that these others are no more.

The actual present is therefore rarely the moment of fullest life to any one ; for nearly all have felt the ebb of vigour or happiness, or helpfulness, or counsel, or example, or stimulation by the loss of some dear and precious one.

We have often felt that such thoughts as these deserve stated and public recognition in our religious assemblies. This is just what other parts of Christendom supply to their people in ' All Saints' Day.'

COMMUNION IN SPRING AND AUTUMN

When it is the custom to have only two seasons of Communion, there must necessarily be considerable uncertainty as to the circumstances in which the people shall find themselves when the Communion Sunday arrives. Some of the congregation will be ill ; some will be from home ; some will be tending sick ones ; some will be in full work ; some will be

out of work; some will be at their spiritual best; some will be at their spiritual worst; some will be heartsore; some will be buoyant and bright and happy, and yet the Holy Communion ought to bring to all these conditions some comfort, and sweetness, and hope. For the uncertain things, the things which fluctuate much, are after all the comparatively small things. The sure and steadfast things are great and eternal. God is without change, His attitude towards us is always the same. He unceasingly loves us, and desires our good. And that is the message of Communion Sunday.

But half-yearly Communion has at least one advantage, if it has some disadvantages. It divides the year, just as the year divides the life. Morsels suit us better than things in the lump. We can deal with time better when it is broken up for us. Spring and autumn represent two stages in a universal process. The one stands for the fine advance of vigorous and expectant life. The other stands for the slowing down of the same life, when its present purposes are achieved. There is a suitableness, therefore, in presenting Jesus to the soul at these two periods of the natural year. The soul is sympathetic with the epochs of nature. The soul quickens with greening fields, and it becomes pensive with the autumn tints. Not as an intruder, but as a worker who moves on natural lines, does

Jesus await us, alike when the earth is making ready for the harvest, and also when her great effort is over, and the results are before us. Not every person requires to be admonished 'to take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves.' But most of us do. Some people can look forward to the end, and in full and constant view of it make wise use of each day, nay, of each passing hour. Most of us require that the great whole of life should be broken up for us, to suit our habit of shorter views. How few can see a year from beginning to end, until it is behind us, past and gone! Every man knows that the significance of the natural year consists in the fact that it holds spring and autumn. All labour of the fields strives to be worthy of the one, and all hope centres upon the other. The association of Communion with these seasons would seem, therefore, to be using a kindly and reasonable method with the soul. For side by side and not apart—in friendlywise and not in strangeness to one another, nor in antagonism —do the natural and spiritual purposes of the universe proceed.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

THE DUTY OF PREPARATION

'He that prepareth not himself, except only when a festiva draweth near, or when custom compelleth him thereunto, shall too often be unprepared.'—THOMAS À KEMPIS.

THERE are devout people in the Scottish communion who are beginning to express a wish for more opportunities of obeying their Lord's command to remember Him in the breaking of bread. That system therefore appears to me to be best which has weekly Communions as a part of the order of service for the Lord's Day. And for this, among other reasons—It would embrace our present usage without constraint to those who might continue to prefer it, and without restriction to those who desired more frequent celebration.

It is true we should seek to live in constant fitness to realise the especial nearness to our souls of the Son of man, who is also Son of God, in the elements of Holy Communion. Our present usage invites, however, this reflection—Does it not sometimes happen that the particular day fixed for our half-yearly Communion finds us so situated that we cannot conveniently, or comfortably, or conscientiously go forward to the tables? And again—Are

there not many Sundays throughout the half-year when everything within and without would make it a most refreshing experience for us to communicate, if the opportunity were only given us ?

I am thinking now of the industrial troubles of the past weeks—the troubles which are not yet overpast ; and I remind you that you will be asked to come together on an early day, as brethren in a common faith, of one household, of one Fatherhood.

Ironworker, shopkeeper, ironmaster, collier, all kinds of men and women, related and inter-related, industrially and socially, and all affected hurtfully by the action of some : all are reminded that they have a place to fill at the Feast of Holy Remembrance and Re-dedication. '*Ye* serve the Lord Christ.' 'One is *your* Master, even Christ.' These words describe the relation of the immortal spiritual man to the Most High, as revealed in Jesus.

But the terms, you observe, are borrowed from the relation of man to man in the organised industries by which all are nourished and sustained. They are the terms more prominently before us in the present unfortunate dispute. It is by the purification and enlargement of spiritual relationships that we become able to fulfil in integrity and charity earthly relationships.

Industrial struggles, class hatreds, individual

feuds and quarrels, remind us of the weakness of our perception of spiritual ideals, and the feebleness of our loyalty to them. Even if once strong, they tend to fade and die away in the dark times of ill-feeling and contention.

Will masters and men, who are members of the church, be able to resuscitate and invigorate at this time the obscured and weakened spiritual relationship which is the seal of their salvation? At all events we invite both alike, and every class and section, to use the approaching Communion as the challenge of the soul to the vaunted omnipotence of Earth to defeat the gracious ends of Heaven—'Who shall separate us from the love of God?'

It may then be that to each contrite and earnest spirit will come the consciousness of the deep unity of man with God, in which abides and from which proceeds the other unity so often disturbed and sometimes cruelly broken—the oneness of man with man. 'I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor any other creature is able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' And 'We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren.'

The breezes and strong tempests agitate the surface of the sea. The eternal calm remains in the vast under-depths. Thence the never-broken

peace ascends upon the scene of noisy strife, and bids 'Be still!'

Thus the soul's rest in God chides and brings to quiet its own unrest with man.

THE KALEIDOSCOPE

'For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.'—1 Cor. xi. 26.

I

A FEW pieces of glass, various in shape and colour, kept in position, but free to move when the tube is turned—such is the simple wonder of the kaleidoscope. The possible combinations are innumerable, and they are always beautiful. But the pieces are selected. They are, each of them, beautiful in themselves.

In ordinary life, the elements of human society are not selected. This explains many combinations which are unlovely—indeed, distressingly hideous. In so small a group as a small family, one evil life will altogether prevent the others from falling into harmonious combination. With larger groups, and yet larger, till we have the world before us, there are, indeed, ever-shifting scenes; but, beholders say, these scenes are never altogether lovely; nay, they

exasperate, they sadden the heart, for they bring together forms and colours which lend themselves to no coherent plan. There are flung together, they say, forms perfect in outline and formless things which no hand has touched to shape or use ; rainbow hues, and spaces void and colourless ; exquisite toning here and there, and spattered upon them, overlapping, half-obscuring them, patches as of mud, or of blood, or mere horrible blackness.

Now, Jesus speaks of ' choosing,' and His apostles speak of ' calling.' They mean one and the same thing. It is the search for the right-minded, in order to harmonious grouping. Not for the self-glorification of the ' chosen ' and the ' called,' be it noted, but that ' others seeing . . . may glorify your Father who is in Heaven.' That as a first result. The other result likewise concerns the onlookers, and yet more practically. For it is by beholding this order and unity that the children of disobedience are to be transformed, by the renewing of their minds to the better thing they see.

The combinations of the Christ-like are infinitely varied ; but they are always seemly and sometimes very lovely. It is, therefore, the worthiest of ambitions to be, by earnest will, some part of the well-ordered and right-minded life of man upon the earth. In the grouping of the good alone do we perceive truth. The bad in their separate groupings and

in their unavoidable minglings with the good, present a lie. They are the lie in trade and commerce, in all human relationships, and in all speculative opinion. Indeed, that in which any of us is wanting through wilful sin, is the measure of the unbeautiful we bring into every picture of human life.

II

St. Paul tells the converts at Corinth that when they come together to eat the bread and drink of the cup of commemoration they shew the Lord's death till He come. Here is fitness by selection for the visible presentation of the sublimest truth by a joint deed of men.

Many forms of eating and drinking show forth the Lord's death. The Lord's death is showed forth in terrible sufficiency in all the larger groupings of men and women in the human kaleidoscope. The hurt which everywhere is done to love and right, is the present-day equivalent and synonym for the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus. Every wrong-doer helps by every evil deed to bring the Lord's death to our minds.

But it is only those who are 'called to be saints' who can show the Lord's death *till He come.* This picture is a marvel of colour blending: so to image present sorrow that the coming joy will somehow

be seen stealing into the weeping eyes, and shaping the drawn lips for a smile that is not yet, and yet is there ; so to paint death and such a death, that the thorns lack nothing of their cruel point, nor the nails ; and the head is fallen forward on the broken heart ; all this, and yet, with it and in it, *He comes* !

Oh communicants, mark what you are bidden do for the world ! And you alone can do it. No other grouping of mortal men, saving the coming together into one place from time to time of those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and love His appearing, can help the world to know that the history of humanity lies between these two—the Lord's death and the Lord's coming. These are the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, of the outcome in thought and in deed of the moral capacity and tendency of the race. Each man holds, and has ever held in his complex being, at once the rejection and the adoration of the Best. True progress, in the few or in the many, is measurable only by the faintness or the clamour with which these opposing qualities utter their respective watchwords. May we so live in the love of Him and in holy obedience to Him that by reason of us and others, 'Crucify Him, crucify Him' shall tend to become but a lingering echo, while more and more, 'Come, Lord Jesus' shall voice the vigour of the nobler choice.

COMING TO CHRIST

'Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.'—John vi. 37.

Remember that Jesus came 'from the Father.' The Fatherliness of the Almighty is the innermost and uttermost fact of the universe. The human being who 'comes to Jesus,' finds that there is nothing beyond. Nor has he desire to go farther. His wish is to 'abide in Him.' It is because of this that Jesus habitually associates 'rest,' with 'coming to Him.' Do we know what He means by 'Rest?' He surely means not mere repose, not stagnation, but the condition of soul most favourable to the noblest activities of the spiritual life.

The Apostle tells us that he that is in Christ Jesus is a 'new creation.' One of two things happens to each one of us. We change daily by being 'conformed,' or by being 'transformed.' 'Transformed' is the word used to express what is constantly taking place with him who is moving towards Jesus. The nearer a man gets to the innermost and the uttermost of things, the more decidedly does he take on the likeness of that to which he is drawing near.

'Conformed' describes a similar process, but in an opposite direction. He who starts from the outward, from the husk or shell of things and travels

evermore away from the deeps of thought and moral purpose, becomes daily more like the life he affects. He is being conformed to the comparatively meaningless externality of the universe. His state is consequently unrest, the ever-shifting, and resembles the waves of the sea.

Observe now, that Jesus says that he will not cast out any who 'come to Him.' The nature of the innermost and uttermost is in such true accord with man, that it is incapable of disdain, and it is altogether averse to rejection. The darkness where there is 'weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth,' is an 'outer' darkness. Always it is an 'outer' darkness. The innermost heart of things is light and joy. He who travels well and in the right way, comes to the 'rest' of God. Herein is the import ance and value of entering upon the right way—there is no possibility of being 'cast out.'

At this season the Church echoes the invitation of Jesus. It says, 'Come towards the central, the innermost; enter the path of reverent thought and moral earnestness, and be sure that it will hold your feet until you reach the true starting point of the immortal life—the sense of the Fatherhood of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.'

THE UNREALISED IN BODY AND SOUL

'I am that Bread of Life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.'—John vi. 48, 49.

Food is a symbol. It suggests something beyond itself. It suggests higher forms of life. 'Use me,' it says, 'and I shall prove myself competent to sustain *your life*.' Tons of grain and rivers of water are just tons of grain and rivers of water until living things, birds and animals and men, partake of them; then only do they pass into muscle and nerve and brain. Movement, action, speech, and even thought are all dependent upon bodily sustenance. The selection of appropriate food, originally an instinct, tends to become a science with civilised man; he is very far, however, as yet from an enlightened and well-instructed system of feeding himself. So far as health depends upon the wise use of food, civilised man is either perplexed by the great variety of choice, or he is liable to be poisoned by adulterations, or he uses abundance in a way which renders it scarcely less hurtful than want. Nevertheless, food continues to symbolise the highest forms of physical life in a state of healthful vigour. That is the intention, and that is the faculty resident in food. All other results are failures. Yet even when most wisely used the power of food to sustain

life has its limits—'Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.'

Inside the limits then of the possible duration of physical life there is room for a science of right feeding. But Jesus taught that there was a soul life, and that there was food for the soul life. In a figurative sense, He offered Himself to the world as soul food; and He hinted that soul nourishing was one of the highest duties of man. He called upon men to set food before their souls, and to bid them partake that they might live. How Jesus came to identify Himself with soul food is no mystery. It was part of His self-consciousness that His ideas, His beliefs, His conceptions of God and Goodness, His estimate of the human being, His outlook upon all things, His reach into things spiritual and eternal, were the pre-ordained food of the human soul. He was insistent that men should eat of Him. The right use of soul food results in a soul condition which Jesus calls Salvation. His religion is, therefore, the science of soul-feeding. For men may starve, or they may misfeed, their souls.

The analogy between body feeding and soul feeding holds all along the line until we reach the question of duration. The body perishes, however well it is nourished. The soul that is well nourished never dies. Therefore, brethren, 'Take, eat, this is

My body, which is broken for you.' Be very anxious to give your souls every opportunity of partaking of their appropriate nourishment. Be fearful of starving them, or of poisoning them. What impresses us upon a thoughtful view of the universe is the Unrealised in Body and Soul, the 'What might be.' This constitutes, in one aspect of it, our reproach; and in another aspect of it, our hope.

JESUS THE MEDIUM

'One Mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all.'—1 Timothy ii. 5 (R.V.).

In some quiet hour it will be profitable to consider the significance of the Lord's Supper, that we may realise afresh what gives the Sacrament its hold upon the heart of Christendom. Theological statements regarding the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus do not invariably lead the devout partaker to the root of the matter; nor is that the business of Dogmatic Theology. For, just as vegetables and flowers precede the science of plant life, which we call Botany; and suns and stars precede the science of the heavenly bodies, which we call Astronomy; so spiritual truths and the individual's experience of them are antecedent

to the science which seeks to formulate and arrange these, and which we call Theology. It is often our distress to find that verbal descriptions of things have become unmeaning, for the thing itself is changed or has altogether ceased to be. While it is scarcely conceivable that a Sacrament of the Church should have become to any one an empty form, only good can result from a reverent attempt to disclose the spiritual truth which is latent in Holy Communion, and which has been, is now, and ever shall be the life and power of the Sacrament. Theological definitions of the efficacy of the Lord's Supper are, we have said, subsequent to the experience of its efficacy by the devout partaker. Doctrinal definitions are, moreover, various, and in some points contradictory of one another. Where is the doctrinal statement which exactly fulfils our personal realisation of the efficacy of the act of Communion? Is it not more likely that the partaker feels the peculiar power of the Sacrament without being consciously aided by the verbal form in which it is presented in the standard of his Church? Does not the word Mediator, or better still, Medium, rise most readily to our lips when we try to describe our impressions of the effect produced on us and in us by this Sacrament?

Yes, we find ourselves furnished with a new medium through which to look upon the world

and all it contains, and all that is transacted therein. Likewise a new medium through which to behold the Most High God. And the effect is infinitely comforting. Between God and every man there is the physical world with its marvels and ministrations. But the world by itself is an imperfect medium for spiritual vision. The Broken Bread and poured out Wine of Holy Communion enable us to super-add to the world the whole personality of Jesus. Having thus a perfect medium, we see distinctly and afar, and are enabled to give everything its true place and character and purpose. Best of all we see God as our Father. As it is through the same medium that we ourselves are seen, we are sure that God sees us as His children. Holy Communion enables us frail creatures to realise the significance of Jesus as the manifestation of God. Jesus is the love and pain and sorrow of the Eternal One. To the believer He seems to penetrate and pervade all experiences, all incidents. He besets and enfolds, like an atmosphere, God and now and hereafter, life and death and all things. Oh! the power of that broken body and shed blood! Looked at through Jesus all things are new, even the heavens and earth. And new just because true. The worthy partaker sees no longer as through a glass darkly, but face to face. This is the eternal efficacy that resides in the appropria-

tion by faith of Jesus the mediator or medium between man and all that man's soul looks out upon—God and man and all things.

WORD AND ACT

'Take, eat; this is My body.'—Matt. xxvi. 26.

It is not easy for people to say what effect has been produced in their heart and lives by the religion of Jesus. Words either fall short or are in excess of the actual.

To what extent is each one of us restrained from evil and urged to goodness by our professed fellowship with Jesus? Who can tell? Who can say? How far are we helped in the troubles of life, comforted in its sorrows, kept clean amid its defilements by the conscious or unconscious working in us of the mind that was in Christ? Who can tell? Who can say? How far has each one of us penetrated the mystery of human life, passing, on our way to verities, things which once seemed real and important? Who can tell? Who can say?

There is not in existence a form of words capable of giving utterance to the varied spiritual states of each.

In what manner Jesus has affected our individual minds ; how far He has instructed us ; how far He has quickened us ; to what extent He is to us all that is knowable about God and the unrevealed hereafter—where are the words which every one of us is ready to endorse as being a true and particular account of these things ? Nor is it possible to put words together which shall contain exactly no more and no less the description of these things.

It is like the movement of life in the spring-time among trees and plants and flowers. With some of these the indwelling life which has begun to stir shows itself in the swelling bud. With others, the buds are at the bursting. Some, of what we call an early kind, are showing the opening leaves ; and, while it is thus with tree and plant, we know that the ground is covered with the flowering snowdrop and crocus, and the sweet-scented violet. With all it is spring-time.

But no description of the evidence of pervading life is applicable to each alike. And there are kinds which we call late. For long, it seems as though there were no life in them. But those who know are sure that life is present, and is slowly stirring there as elsewhere. These will give their bloom when other blooms are fled.

There is no form of creed in friendship or in love.

And there are times when words are better left unsaid, even though we are sure that they are true and wisely chosen.

The touch of flesh with flesh, the kiss and hand-grasp, holds all of love and of affectionateness from least to greatest.

How ever-shifting were that formula which should seek to express, from day to day throughout the years the actual state of any human relationship! How much better is it to leave these relationships to speak through symbols!

So it is with us and our great Lord and Life. Much talk about our views regarding Jesus; much stress upon our shortcomings as His followers; much reluctance to come up with others and to join His Society and commemorate His love—all this is unbecoming, and is a misuse of words.

Try an Act. Participate in His appointed rite. Use the symbolism He has provided. '*Take, eat*; this is My body which is broken for you.' You will find expression in this symbolism, for the least as for the most, for the most as for the least; for the Alpha as for the Omega, for the Omega as for the Alpha of spiritual life.

Jesus recommends us to seek to express our relationships to Him in the symbols of bread and wine rather than in forms of words. The *act* is

infinitely elastic. It does not refuse to receive the man of little faith, and its expansiveness enables it to contain him who is greatest in the Kingdom of God.

GOD REVEALED IN JESUS CHRIST

'This do in remembrance of Me.'—Luke xxii. 19.

I DO not pretend to explain these words; indeed I find the greatest difficulty in fitting them into the current conception of things. What do we usually think about the Universe? What do we usually think about God? Is the usual thought about God and the Universe capable of being associated with the words, 'Remember Me?' Even if we listen anxiously is there any likelihood that we shall hear *our* God, God as *we* conceive Him to be, saying to us 'Remember Me?' The words, breathed rather than spoken, the breath a flame, whose heat and light are measureless love. True, we are learning; but we have not yet learned God as revealed in Jesus Christ. We cannot say to Him what He said to Mary Magdalene, '*My* God and *your* God.' In short, friends, our conceptions of God and of the Universe are not Christian, but are only becoming so. The thing which men assail as Chris-

tianity is not Christianity, for even the Church itself is not Christian ; not truly, and fully, and wholly. All that is a long way off.

Now test what I am saying. Here is the test. Can you realise that God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, addresses you by the ministrations of life's experiences in the words and with the tones of the tenderest love, the most engaging affection, the noblest and truest friendship ? Can you think when you peruse the Gospel record and read therein that Jesus said ' Remember Me,' that you have given you in the dying request of that meek and humble heart, the very truth of truth regarding God ; the innermost and uttermost of the Divine nature ; that towards which all spiritual insight and experiences are moving ? Is it not true, as of old, that we think of God as being in the storm, the whirlwind, the fire ? How few of us have reached the ancient Prophet's final conviction that God is in ' the still small voice ' ? Is it then really God revealed in Jesus Christ who discloses His infinite emotion towards us in the words of His Son, ' Remember Me ' ? Yes ; for even as ' he that hath *seen* Me hath seen the Father,' so he that hath *heard* the Son hath heard the Father. The last appeal of Jesus to the human heart ' Remember Me,' is thus the prayer of God to His children upon earth. Moreover, He has prescribed a manner of remembrance. There is one

way among many of remembering Him, and that way is peculiarly well pleasing to Him :—'Do this in remembrance of Me.' And you all know that this is the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus.

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DUTY

LIFE AND THE LAW OF ITS EXPANSION

'He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.'—John vi. 47.

It was the intention of Jesus to affect human life, and human life exclusively, because human life was the only form of life which was ready for Jesus.

The gardener goes to plant life, the forester to tree life, the farmer to the life of grasses and cereals. Jesus came to human life.

It would be quite proper to put into the mouth of the gardener, and the forester, and the farmer, the words of Jesus, 'I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.' That is just what those men do say to the forms of life which it is their business to cultivate. And we all know something of the methods used by these men in their endeavour to cultivate the forms of life with which they have to do. We also know whether they are successful or not. There are familiar aspects of field, and wood, and garden, which testify for or against the craftsmen who have these in charge. But neither gardener, nor forester, nor farmer could say, 'That which believes in me, that which I tend, hath everlasting life.' Still, it is

helpful to have in our minds those men and their ways with the lower forms of life when we are thinking of Jesus and His purpose, and His power with human life. For the effect of skilful labour upon the lower forms of life is undoubtedly to strengthen in them the principle of life, to expand life and prolong it.

Now, just what the intelligent gardener may be to the rose and the vine, just what the capable forester may be to the trees, just what the skilful farmer may be to the meadows and the corn-lands, Jesus may be to the life of each of us. And Jesus is, as we know, the Good Husbandman. That is to say, there need be no doubt whatever about His power and willingness to make our life richer and nobler and more enduring. Well, then, how does He do this? One way and only one at this time. Jesus gives us more to think about, more to love, more to work for. Indeed, it is in respect of the things which Jesus gives men to think about, and to love and to work for, that He is said to give them everlasting life. Everlasting life is the principle of life in man nourished upon the enduring interests provided by the teaching of Jesus.

Now, one of these enduring interests is the advance or incoming of God to the heart of humanity. Whosoever desires this, and also works for it; to whomsoever this has become an interest, that

person has life which Jesus would call everlasting. The Church, which has large redemptive aspirations, and which labours according to its powers to realise its aspirations, has everlasting life.

Foreign Missions, therefore, really mean far off soil to which the roots of everlasting life have stretched, seeking nourishment from participation in a vast movement of enduring interest.

God will work for ever to make His children more like His well-beloved Son. And He has enabled us by this to know whether the life we have is merely mortal, or whether it is everlasting. If as yet our life is merely mortal, it will be found that our interests are transitory and perishable. If Jesus has given us everlasting life we shall have the testimony in ourselves, for we shall be conscious, amid all our passing cares, that we have an interest in great and enduring purposes of the mind and spirit.

Whosoever works the works of God will work as long as God. A true concern for the redemption of the peoples of the world testifies of the soul which is so concerned that it shall never die. Jesus has given it everlasting life by a vast accession of love, and through love, of will to labour.

THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT

'The Missionary Spirit, in some form or other, is inseparably associated with all true and worthy knowledge.'—Sir Oliver Lodge.

The distinguished scientist from whose book, *The Survival of Man*, I have taken my heading or text, means us to understand that unless we give forth, as well as get, we should find ourselves living in a stand-still world. It is the duty of every one to make some conscious effort to get, and also some conscious effort to give. Nor are we to limit this getting and giving to any one thing; but rather are we to recognise that the principle is to be applied to everything by which our fellow creatures can be benefited. The missionary spirit is not to be thought of as belonging only to the missionary efforts of churches. The missionary spirit is indispensable for the dissemination of all forms of truth and knowledge. The word 'Missionary' means one who goes forth upon an errand. And the 'missionary' spirit is just a readiness and a desire to go forth, in such ways as may be possible to us, upon the lives of others, bearing to them something which we believe will be for their advantage. The cultivation of this spirit is therefore very important. The less we have of it the poorer in every way will

all of us be. The more of it we have, the surer we may be that we are not missing much of the wealth of contemporary production. Do we sufficiently realise the process by which the best fruits of thought, research, invention, experience and experiment, come into the commonplace of our lives? They come by the operation of the missionary spirit. Our fellow-men have sent those things to us.

There ought not, therefore, to be any sense of strangeness when we are invited to exhibit the missionary spirit in association with what Jesus has taught us, and with what Jesus has become to us. Do we not believe that it would be for the advantage of non-Christian peoples that they should be Christian? We are part of the Church of Jesus. Why is it that we are among His disciples, if it is not that having had 'Good Tidings' brought to ourselves, we should greatly desire to send them to those who have them not? If the Astronomer and the Botanist and other scientists had had as little of the missionary spirit as the churches, we should have remained in the ignorance of our great-great-grandfathers. The fact is that we live in a world which carries on all its beneficent operations in the missionary spirit. The world is missionary to the core. It keeps nothing to itself. It is always sending forth of itself for our benefit. If it ceased to be missionary

we should perish. Why should it be thought a strange thing that professed Christians should cultivate and exhibit the missionary spirit? When Jesus commanded His disciples to go and teach all nations, He was asserting that the world can get what is good for it only by the exercise of the missionary spirit. The Sun is missionary, the rains are missionary, the ocean currents are missionary, the winds of heaven are missionary. God is represented as 'sending His Son.' God is missionary. Who is there who ought to be more ashamed if they have not the missionary spirit than the worshippers of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?

THE SPIRITUAL ASPECT OF GIVING

'Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart.'—2 Cor. ix. 7 (R.V.).

I

The wonder of things is found in their composite character. Light, water, air, are probably even more wonderful than we think them to be, because their composition is not yet fully known. A man coming home from his workshop, or leaving his place of business, or putting his weary horse into the stable, or resting his plough in the last made furrow for the

day, is to many observers commonplace. But that is only the mistake of an unreflective habit of mind, which sees, but does not perceive what it looks upon. If we could realise that, apart from the phenomena of nature, all else that encompasses us, all that we meet with eye, or ear, or heart, is of human production, we should come to regard with more discriminating intelligence the hourly and daily contribution of each man to the wonderful total. Consider the houses, their outside beauty or ugliness, their interior comfort or squalor; the little bit of earth in front of the houses planted with flowers, or neatly sodded with tiny walks trimmed and laid with gravel, or the plot neglected, insulted, its proper use denied to it; the streets and pavements clean or littered with soiled paper; the shops, and all that is offered for sale in them, and all that is bought in them; the churches, what they mean and what they do not mean; what they represent of true worth and nobleness, and what they furnish of sham, and trickery, and spitefulness, and littleness; the many children, their quarrelsomeness and their affectionateness, their good manners and their want of good manners, and their bad manners; in short, consider the infinite total of manifested human life which cannot be detailed, but to which each man and woman and child is a contributor!

It is not alone man, therefore, but his whole en-

compassing circumstance, which is 'fearfully and wonderfully made.' And he makes it himself: after his own likeness he fashions it, and it becomes the reflection of himself. The city reflects the citizens. The importance of each, even the least, is consequently very great. But how shall we estimate the contribution of each? We cannot estimate it, but we may indicate the manner in which contribution is made. Each man gives day by day some quality to the work that he does. Likewise every man daily increases in himself that same quality which he gives to his work. The manner in which a man's labour is returned to himself is called money. The disposal of money is therefore one of the best tests of the quality of a man. In spending money a man does his second and greater work. His desires constitute Demand; and Supply merely follows. What he demands by his purchases and his bestowals determines the nature of the influence he wields, whether it is for good or for evil.

II

I have said that the skill and labour of the worker is returned to him in the form of money; and when he has received his wage or pay his greater work begins. As a wage earner he labours to produce what is required by others. As a money spender he

employs labour to supply his own wants. We sometimes contrast too sharply the capitalist and the working man. Each individual wage earner is a capitalist ; and the total of wage earners constitutes the richest of all capitalists. Therefore it is that the mightiest influence of modern times is the life-habit of the masses. The *Million* has far more responsibility for *what is*, than the millionaire. There is moral quality to some extent in every kind of work that is done, but that which controls and directs the disbursements of the ' Million ' is altogether moral, even to the smallest outlays for the necessaries of life, and being moral it is often spiritual as well. It is not uncommon to find a man's whole life-habit formed and sustained with reference to his spiritual standpoint. There are people who regard their wage or income as their own and for their personal uses, only after certain deductions have been made in the interest of the necessitous. A tenth part is the rule with some ; with others it is more ; with the great majority it is far less. But whether much or whether little here appears the spiritual aspect of giving. For somewhere in a man's spending is to be found his whole quality, moral and spiritual. One could not say what kind of man has made a chair, or a suit of clothes, or built a house, or dressed a garden. Of taste and skill as displayed in such work one could speak,

but not of moral or spiritual qualities with any certainty.

A man is utterly disclosed and declared only in spending. The things, therefore, which are in demand, and the extent of the demand ; the purposes which are liberally sustained, and those which with hard begging scarcely subsist—all upon which money is spent—bread, boots, literature, tobacco, missions, pastry, hospitals, beer, theatres, charity, cigarettes, photography, railways, self-culture, house accommodation, etc., etc., are called into existence by the necessities, or whims, or affections, or vices, or tastes, or aspirations, or appetites of a moral being. The character of each man determines the demand for these things and all other things to the measure of his power of spending. Ascertain the earnings of a nation and upon what it has spent its earnings, and you have before you, as in a mirror, the character of the nation. There is not much sham in spending nor yet in giving, whatever be the adulterations in things sold. We may rely, therefore, upon the accuracy of that picture of ourselves which is drawn by our spendings and bestowals.

III

Yes, the outlook, the expectation, the spiritual fellowship, the recognition of common interests, the sense of high duties—all that makes up the larger

manhood and womanhood finds its expression through the medium of bestowals. The amount given does not measure the giver ; but he who has, and gives not, has declared his own littleness, his insignificance, in the scheme of things. The roots he has struck into the universe are tiny and tender, and he grows to no size. His sense of life corresponds exactly with his littleness. It is sufficient for one of his dimensions. A poor Christian who sends a penny to the India Famine has established a relation with the universe which places him among the great ones of the earth. The church member who determines to miss none of the opportunities of giving which the Church offers by its schemes and its local activities, need not be rich in order to accomplish that resolve. A very poor member might do it conscientiously with no greater expenditure than twelve pence in the year. Twenty-four halfpence intelligently and piously bestowed will enable the giver to establish sympathetic and helpful relationships with a great and widespread variety of mankind.

Behold in how large a world even a poor man may live by the exercise of the grace of liberality ! *And that is the end of Collections.* Collections are to be regarded, therefore, as a means used by the Church for aiding the growth of the Christian from narrowness to broadness, from littleness to great-

ness. Since it is true that 'where the *treasure* is the heart is also,' it requires but moderate intelligence to perceive that whoso distributes his treasure widely, by wise and pious bestowal, must necessarily be large-hearted. And this is the quality which more than any other enables a man to know God.

OUR GREATEST DESIDERATUM—THE GOOD MAN

'Ye are the salt of the earth. Ye are the light of the world.' Matt. v. 13, 14.

Not that church-goers say this about themselves, or that they should be encouraged to say it. So soon as the church-goer allows himself to think that he is a superior person his utility departs. His light is quenched, the salt has lost its savour. The Church has lessened its influence just in proportion to its pretentiousness. It has retained its influence just in proportion to the extent to which it has limited itself to the forms of activity which are proper to 'light,' and to 'salt.' That portion of the Church which has most powerfully affected human society for good has been composed of those who have done nothing more than simply be good and worthy. Of course being good and worthy necessarily implies

much more than merely quiescent relations to other people. The good man has to follow his business day by day, and he has to come into touch with his fellow-men in quite a number of ways. But in all that his goodness just manifests itself. So soon as a man tries to do more than *be good*, so soon as he speaks, or writes, or preaches, he enters a new sphere, and becomes conscious of discrepancies, unrealities, and, unless he is very careful, pretensions. The difference between the actual goodness in the world and the goodness which exists only in words, explains the scorn of the world, and its refusal to repent and leave its sins.

We are greatly in need of good people who are just good, really good, and nothing more. We need goodness which has little to say, and which wears no badge, and utters no *Shibboleth*. It is a question where we might have been to-day, in temperance, in commercial integrity, in consideration for the poor and needy, in the consciousness of our interest in things unseen and eternal, had we contented ourselves with *being* temperate and upright, and mindful of the weak, and above all, quietly conscious of God and His fatherly love towards us and all men. A great deal is *said* about temperance. Much that has been *said* has only hindered the progress of temperance among all classes of the people. The *temperate person* has all through been the chief

influence working for temperance. So with everything else. St. Paul was right, 'Ye are our epistle,' said he, 'known and read of all men.' 'Light' and 'salt' work by their qualities, not by pretensions or labelled excellences. The power that is working for good amongst us is chiefly that which emanates from the multitude of the modest and unnamed ones, who are simply good and nothing else. Those who 'lift up the voice and cry' may be equally good, but they and their cause are sure to suffer by the inevitable contrast between reality and exaggerated speech.

Let us honour and prize the simply good. May our churches nourish them in increasing numbers. For the world is to be leavened, not coerced, nor bound with chains, nor put upon bread and water. More 'light' streams from one man who is good than can be struck from a platform of noisy declaimers. There is often more 'salt,' more preserving power, in a single fine soul than could be extracted from wave upon wave of abusive rhetoric. As it is the goodness of God which leads us to repentance, so it is the good man and the good woman; it is *goodness* which all the while is blessing our world with those influences, which wean us from the baser thing, and attach our affections to the thing that is more excellent. Nothing tells permanently for human advancement but 'light'

and 'salt.' The wordy substitutes for these neither illumine nor preserve. They only make confusion 'worse confounded.'

A NEGLECTED COUNSEL

'Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand.'—Ephesians vi. 13.

I

THERE is genuine, and, most certainly, loudly-uttered regret being expressed at some of the prevalent forms of moral weakness and collapse in our fellow creatures around us. The evils to which these sufferers have yielded are being denounced, and the demand is vociferously made for their repression and removal. That is one side of the matter. There is the football match and there is the horse race, and in connection with both of these there is the pernicious habit of betting. Indeed there is betting upon nearly everything which has enough of the element of uncertainty. The betting man is rarely in straits to find something to bet about. Then there is the Club and the public-house, and the private house, and the shebeen, and there are besides many other ways in which those who are so inclined may indulge the alcoholic

habit, or the ether habit, or the morphia habit, or the laudanum habit, or a dozen other similar '*habits*.' Nobody has yet been able to show what effect legislation has really had in diminishing either gambling or excessive drinking, or the drug habit. Yet we are being constantly invited to legislate against these things.

Legislation is to many people—God. There is one God, and Parliament is his name. But is that true? For my part I believe in God; but I do not believe that the laws of men have much to do with the making of human character. Instincts are not the creation of Parliaments; neither are rational desires, nor moral ideals. And these are the true springs of human conduct. Man progresses according to his possession and right use of instincts and rational desires and moral and spiritual ideals. The friends of humanity are always trying to exalt these, and multiply them, knowing well that only in this way can humanity advance to higher states, and stay there, once he has reached them. Now we know that many of our fellow citizens are very deficient in those springs of worthier action. All of us are deficient, and some of us are more so. That is the whole matter. So long as those springs of right conduct are wanting, you may, by law, restrain and deprive and coerce, but you do not alter the man, you merely, at most, change the direction of his

evil propensity. It is more likely that you merely stimulate his invention and cunning to devise methods of secrecy.

II

What has come of the other method? Is it given up because there is no show about it, no big poster, no campaign, no free opening of the flood-gates of abuse? The other method is the Christian method. Give men something to defend, and they will defend it stoutly, if you show them how. What men come to value highly, they will seek to hold. What was that for the defence of which St. Paul urges the Ephesians to take to themselves the whole armour of God? It was the soul's greatness and preciousness. It was the soul's sense of its deliverance from the degradation of the evil life. It was for *soul* as the rightful king in each man's breast that St. Paul bade the Ephesians marshal all available defence. The mother cannot temper the cold of the north wind, nor call sunshine from the heavens, but she can, and she does, hap her child against wind and rain, and send it forth. She confides in her protective measures. She is desirous of her child's health, and she arms it against all possible assailants.

Men need first of all to have something they love and revere. It will be easy then to teach them how

to protect it. Are even bodily health and wholesomeness esteemed as they might be? Is home, the wife and children, are these held in as high regard as they ought to be? Is character, the moral quality of the human being, is it dear to every man? Is soul the conscious crown of each man's nature? Is immortality each man's hope? Is the Father's Home each man's goal? Where would be the power of sin if all men became intelligent and faithful and resolute defenders of all or any of these precious things? What each of us wants is strengthening. Evil has no power in itself. The man who neglects to fortify his nature against evil is almost invariably the man who has not enough of rational desires, and of moral convictions and spiritual ideals to supply him with a sufficient motive for self-defence. It is open to question how far Parliament is able to weaken his foes. It is beyond all question that God has so made man that so soon as he believes that he has something worth possessing, he will put himself in the way of such advisers as St. Paul, and arm himself so that he may withstand. He who succeeds in persuading a fellow creature of his preciousness is thus the Saviour of his fellow. Salvation comes in no other way.

WHAT MINISTERS OWE TO GREAT LAYMEN

I GRATEFULLY write myself down 'debtor' to two great laymen, both now dead. But I cannot say how much I owe them. The first of these was an elder in the Parish of Whitburn. The second of these was an elder in the Parish of Gartsherrie. Their life's activities were engaged in different spheres of work: but the principles to which they gave loyal obedience were the same. The one was a landowner, and his duties were chiefly those of a country gentleman. The other was an ironmaster, and his duties bound him to the study and handling of complex problems of a commercial and industrial nature. Both were honourable men. Both were deeply sympathetic to everything that concerned human well-being. Both were willing and ready to do more for their fellow-creatures than either the law required of them, or their fellow-creatures were in a state to benefit by. Like all men who think much, and feel much, both were in advance of their day. Both these men were frequently judged by those who could only misjudge them. Both had beautiful private and domestic lives. Both had habits of order, neatness, and punctuality. Both were scrupulous in observing every kind of obliga-

tion. To live in touch with these men, was, daily, to be receiving instruction, rebuke, exhortation, and at once, the reproach and the inspiration which come from great examples.

Yes, I owe a great deal to those two men. Both seemed to be the first to know when the minister was stricken ; they were at all events the first to reach him, with their comfort and aid. I was certain through all those years that there was no possibility of balancing accounts with them. They owed me nothing in comparison with what I owed them. Yet they never sued me as a debtor. They contrived to maintain the attitude of men who still owed me something. It was overwhelming at times.

Shall I tell how these two men did in their relation to the Church ? Both were exemplary attenders at church. Neither of these men would allow any considerations to keep them from Holy Communion. Both the landowner and the ironmaster gave a fixed sum to each Assembly collection, and a fixed sum to the Sunday offertory. If by any chance they were absent from church, their contributions were paid all the same. And therein is our hope for men. For whereas scarcely a single ordinary member feels under any obligation to act in this way towards his Church, those two men invariably acted in that manner.

Another thing I observed as following upon the

goodness of these men was this—their dependents, as we call them, were righteously considered by both of them. Long before the Insurance Act was even talked about, the landowners' employees knew that neither through sickness nor old age would they ever come upon the tender mercies of the parish. Every worker on the estate got his pay throughout his illness, and every veteran worker received his pension. It has been the same in Gartsherrie. What most impressed me, many years ago now, in going from door to door, round the Rows of Gartsherrie, was the number of widows and aged men living in free houses and receiving a weekly allowance. If you follow true goodness to its practical effect upon human affairs you will find that in whatever sphere it has operated, or by however differing personalities it has been exhibited, the end is the same—other, and very often humbler, lives are blessed by it. I am certain I am not the only minister who feels that he owes much to good and great laymen.

MORAL USES OF GREAT MEN

W. E. G.—Born, 29th Dec. 1809.
Died, 19th May 1898.

Universal humanity lays claim to the illustrious dead. The whole world elects to gather to Glad-

stone's burial. In this very hour imagination has revealed to myriads his face, whereon no man shall ever look again. Even now, a myriad hearts shudder as the earth strikes the coffin lid, and sounds the knell of all that is mortal in one of the greatest of the sons of men.

All that is great God means for all. The sun belongs as much to the daisy as to the palm tree. To both it is essential. A truly great man is the chiefest of God's gifts to men, and the lowliest and the worst share in the boon with the highest and the best. To both he is essential. True greatness is ever drawing *all men* unto itself, as well them who plait for it a crown of thorns as those who lave its weary feet with grateful tears.

The work which, for the world's sake, needs most to be done, is just such work as only a great man can do. Jesus, the Son of God, and Son of man, is the exposition now and for ever of the functions of exalted character. The work of great men is mediatorial and redemptive.

By the will of God, and of His unfailing mercy, great men arise amongst us, luminous, directive, like the steady glow of the Pole Star above the waste of waters. They are *mediators* between man and his high destiny, inspiring faith in betterness and pointing the way which leads to it. Hope is nourished upon the bosom of the great. Without

hope there would be no forthgoing of aspiration and endeavour. All interest would stagnate, like unwholesome mire, about the things which are.

And the work of great men is *redemptive*. The transcendent goodness of the few conquers and subdues the sin and waywardness of the many. God looks upon us 'in the face of His anointed.' Nay, we are encouraged to regard ourselves in the reflected glory of the wise and noble. The disinterestedness, the self-abnegation, the larger view, the grand expectancy, the piercing insight, the devotion to duty, the magnanimity, the lofty principles, the chivalrous courage of the great are woven into the robe, which, thrown backwards, hides the shame of the multitude of the ignoble, the dissolute, and the heartless self-seekers of their day. The nakedness of an age is indebted for very covering to the ample garments of the great. Moreover, it is the sound vitality of the great which keeps us really living. It is their exuberant wholesomeness which preserves us from corruption, and 'by their stripes we are healed.'

He who is now at rest has been all this to us, and to the people of our time. And he has been more. He seized the thought of God 'manifest in the flesh' with the strength of a mighty intellect and the faith and rapture of a saint. His life's endeavour was to bring about fresh incarnations. His grand

intent was to make political life religious by embosoming in the body politic a passion for righteousness.

Reverently and gratefully we this day give him back to God. 'The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.' Receive into thy tomb, great servant of God, to be buried with thee, all the wrong thy countrymen have ever done thee, and somewhat too of those sins and faults of ours which make the work of great men like thee so hard upon the earth! With thy flesh we bury all thy shortcomings! With thy ascended spirit we ourselves will rise, God helping us, to purer living and nobler striving. AMEN.

FOR MOURNERS

'Lazarus, come forth!'—John xi. 43.

THESE are the words of Jesus, and they were spoken in a Jewish cemetery. There had been sickness in the home at Bethany, and the sickness was unto death. Lazarus is dead. His sisters are inconsolable.

They have the memory of his good life; it is not enough. They are upborne by abundant sympathy; it is not enough. They believe in his future resurrection; it is not enough. They are

assured that even now he survives the dissolution of the flesh ; still, it is not enough.

' Lazarus, come forth ! ' ' And he that was dead came forth.' Is it gain, or is it loss ?

Let us see. We shall work back from the empty sepulchre. Stone by stone, numbering them as we remove them—we shall take down the goodly fabric of fond memories, discovery of human love and tenderness ; belief confirmed, immortality realised, the Unseen entered.

God had put this in the void which death had left in the sisters' hearts and home.

' *He that was dead came forth.*'

1. To them there is *now* no sacred spot of ground making sacred the whole earth and sea, as the great tomb of all that has ever been loved.

2. Having *now* no trusty guide into the life beyond, the sisters' thoughts turn back, and leave the blessed region unexplored.

3. A great affliction *no longer* gives battle to the grave ; and so, there is no victory.

4. Beliefs are still retained, but they are shadowy, as of old. Only at the thought of death do our beliefs assume a substance. Only to the stroke of death do they ring out, hard as facts.

5. There is one sweet note in all the world's rude music—the note of sympathy with sorrow. Whosoever hears it has faith in human-kind, that in their

heart their God has writ a glorious song which one day they will learn to sing. As much as din of others, it is the noise of our own living which bids our ear believe that all is harsh discord. Grief holds us at rest, and surrounds us with silence. In friend and neighbour our bereavement stirs the tuneful chord, and we are soothed with the rare melody of human tenderness. Alas! that we should forget the strain when the heartache is gone. But for our grieving we should never have heard it.

6. 'Jesus wept.' As sin discovers to us Divine justice, and penitence Divine mercy, so grief is the discoverer of the Divine compassionateness. Sorrow draws forth for our gladdening the deep harmony of God with man. The priceless tears of Jesus mingle with the gracious overflow of human sympathy. To the stricken heart the love in Heaven is fatherly, the love on earth is brotherly. God, our Father; men, our brethren, is the creed of the afflicted. Alas! that returning happiness should modify its terms, or erase our subscription.

7. Death is a great beautifier. He opens the lips of praise, and silences the detractor. His touch makes our loved ones seem 'worthier to be loved.' Smoothing out every fold, he covers a multitude of sins with the scant drapery of a little good.

Using for great ends the weak things of the world, death, bidden of God, sets child hands to work upon

the new heavens and the new earth. Forth into the unknown go the hearts of the parents seeking their dead. They find them in heavenly places, for 'of such is the Kingdom of God.' Henceforth there is much ascending and descending by the discovered pathway. The qualities in each are interchanged. The earthly home becomes more ideal and heavenly; the heavenly more real and homely.

'Lazarus, come forth!' 'And he that was dead came forth.' The sisters would rather the Power than the Goodness of God. Power gives them their brother from the dead. Goodness resumes her wondrous compensations. They may not have both. Is it gain, then, or is it loss?

THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE

COUNTRY-BRED MEN AS TOWNSMEN

'And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it.'—Genesis ii. 15.

It was then man became Man. For, so long as he lived upon wild fruits, and leaves, and roots; or so long as he was a hunter and lived on the flesh of his prey, he was not, as yet, Man. Not until he had harnessed his brain, his faith, his labour, and his patience to the processes of nature, as a cultivator of the soil, did man become Man. When you look upon Man in the Garden of Eden, you are looking upon the potential founder of empires and civilisations. For the foundation of the entire fabric of progressive human life is agriculture.

We have heard much within the past forty years of people, our own people, leaving the land. That was in consequence of our democratic governments habitually neglecting agriculture. What I wish to speak about now, however, is the way in which town-dwellers have failed to recognise and conserve the special qualities of those who have left the land and become denizens of the town. The population of Coatbridge has been largely recruited by the arrival amongst us of country-bred men and

women. Has any preparation been deliberately made to preserve in these country-bred men and women the habits of life and the qualities of mind and heart which are peculiar to tillers of the ground? The man who begins his life in an iron-work is put together, brain and heart and spirit, in a way quite different to that by which the country-bred man is formed. The qualities, therefore, which come to characterise the two types of men are different. And this difference is important, inasmuch as it implies that the incomer from the fields and gardens of the open country, brings with him into the town qualities which the town itself can never produce. Whatever a man is working with, that he is nearest to. Its nature and the manner in which he has to handle it, get into the man himself. To bring a bar of iron out of iron ore involves very different processes from raising grain or potatoes from the soil. The iron worker and the agriculturist are therefore different types of men. Their distinctive qualities become apparent in everything they are, and in everything they do, outside of their actual work—their religion, their politics, their social and industrial ideas; the whole temper and attitude of their minds to the things of life. A man habituated from boyhood to the methods of the furnace and the steam-hammer comes to think that human progress cannot be effected save by analogous in-

strumentality. The country-bred man, on the other hand, has never seen anything so wonderful and beautiful as the things which reach their perfection by growth.

What a fine character a combination of those two types of men would make! I can think of no better. Alas! we suffer the country-bred man to lose the habits and tastes which communion and collaboration with nature have begotten in him. When he comes amongst us he goes to a tenement, and perhaps gets the length of having a window-box, or a plant of ivy in a tub. Is it not time that we began to think of the elements which make up our town-population? Are not the special qualities of the country-bred man or woman too valuable for all purposes of citizenship to be allowed to perish? Will not the war-time plots make a beginning at least of some well-considered endeavour to salve such a precious asset!

THE TROGLODYTE OR CAVE-DWELLER

My endeavour shall be to say something about hole-in-the-wall beds, which may have the effect of hastening their displacement by the open bedstead. The hole-in-the-wall bed is not a modern contrivance suggested by sanitary or hygienic

principles. It is the stubborn survival of those not so very remote days, in which a man accounted himself fortunate, if he had the advantage of retiring every night to the shelter of a cave. Any one looking at a bed of this kind will readily perceive that its origin is certainly as I have stated it. The fact is that we are in this town modified troglodytes. The advantage, however, was all with the ancient cave-dweller. He lived habitually in the open air. He slept during the darkness of the night upon a couch of rushes, or bracken, or heather. When wounded or ill, his friends would move his bed so that the sunshine fell upon him, and the sweet air filled his lungs. The modified troglodyte of our town is, in these respects, worse off than his remote ancestor. The hole-in-the-wall bed is not capable of being moved; nor can the sick man who lies on it be moved, except clumsily and painfully; nor can the foul air with which the cavity is filled be readily displaced. The art of healing has no greater hindrance than the hole-in-the-wall bed. The art of nursing is helpless before the conditions imposed upon the sufferer who is relegated to his hole-in-the-wall bed. Every physician, and every nurse in the town, is ready to endorse what I have said.

Who then is to blame for the perpetuation of this baneful usage? Largely, I presume, the people themselves. They have been reared in it; they

have become used to it; they have never fully considered its disadvantages; they are afraid of the strangeness of the open bedstead. It is not a question of space, for the space taken up by a hole-in-the-wall bed would hold a full-sized iron bedstead. Might not landlords, architects, physicians, nurses, clergymen, try a little more earnestly to assist the people to effect their final deliverance from this unhealthful arrangement? Every day I see the bad results to the suffering sick of the fixed enclosed bed; the health of the masses has no greater foe.

THE UNDEAFENED DWELLING

'Walls have ears.'—Hazlitt, *English Proverbs.*

The detached dwelling which is characteristic of uncivilised man, and which is still a feature in old village communities even among civilised people, has given place in towns to the tenement. This mode of housing may have its advantages. I propose to deal with one of its disadvantages. It is not an incurable defect which I am to deal with; nevertheless it is a defect which nobody seems concerned to remedy. I refer to the absence of sufficient deafening in tenement structures.

A few illustrations will help to bring this matter before your minds. I was in a recently built part

of the town, calling upon a member of the church. He was greatly pleased with his house. It had space and light and fairly intelligent arrangement. It had, of course, hole-in-the-wall beds. I congratulated him upon everything except the beds. 'I could be doing with the beds,' he said, 'if the walls were deafened.' 'You see,' he continued, 'my head lies there, and on the other side of the wall is Mrs. B——'s bed. She is an old woman and very ill. I hear every groan and cough. Her niece looks after her. She 's a nice lassie, but she loses patience whiles. At all hours of the night I 'm wakened with her sharp tongue. I feel for the old body. Many a time I start up thinking that somebody is raging at me. The lassie speaks that clear that I hear every word. Yes, it 's a fine house, but I 'll have to leave it.' And he did leave it.

I called at a house on the west side of the parish to see a girl who was ill. The kitchen end was as usual bright and warm, but neither the girl nor her mother were visible. They were 'ben' in the room. I went there, and found them both sitting before a poor fire. The room was full of smoke. 'Why are you here, Mrs. A—— ?' I said; 'would you not be better in the kitchen ?' 'Yes,' she said, 'we would, but I had to leave it. That woman through the wall is back again, and the man and she are quarrelling, and the language they use is awful. You

know we hear every word that clear. I could not let Jeanie bide, so I had to take her 'ben' to the 'room.' It 's a bad bit[1] for her with the smoke and the poor fire.'

In the Coatdyke direction lived Mrs. C——, a poor widow. Her home was one large, well-lighted apartment. I happened to say to her, 'Can you tell me the exact time?' 'That can I,' she said, as she moved towards the partition wall. 'Ye see I 've nae 'knock'[2] o' my ain,' she continued, 'but Mrs. T—— through the wa' has a fine yin, and she 's real obliging.' A gentle rap on the wall, and I could hear distinctly the approaching footsteps of the obliging neighbour. 'Weel, Mrs. C——, is that you?' she said. 'Aye, it 's me, Mrs. T——. Can you gie me the richt time o' day?' said Mrs. C——. 'She 's just on the stroke o' yin,' replied the voice through the wall. And sure enough in a moment I heard the famous 'knock' sound out the hour. 'It 's real handy,' said the knockless widow to me with a grateful look, 'and she 's to be relied upon.'

The undeafened dwelling has its humorous side. Few people would, however, advocate the undeafened tenement, just for the fun of it. The moral hurt which is being done to the dweller in the undeafened tenement is the vastly greater thing. From the

[1] Place. [2] Clock.

lack of adequate deafening for their homes, the majority of our burgh population are subjected to a limitation of liberty and an invasion of privacy which are both irritating and humiliating, while at the same time they are seriously impeding the development of the finer traits of character.

THE FOUNTAIN

'A delusion, a mockery, and a snare.'—Lord Denman.

These three words describe the present state of the 'Whitelaw' fountain. There it stands, a fountain by name, but unable to perform any of the functions of a fountain. By decree of what authority has this state of things been brought about? The recent Licensing Courts revealed to us the existence of a certain partisan brotherhood who believe that when they have arbitrarily suppressed a public-house licence, they have done something to foster the virtue of temperance. People when thirsty must drink something. It seems reasonable to suppose that when a thirsty man finds a drink of water handy, he will not feel driven to apply to a public-house for a drink of beer. But if he applies to a public fountain, and finds it waterless, what better can he do than avail himself of the unfailing hospitality of a licensed house? Is it conceivable

that the same men who declare against the public-house, and what the public-house can offer, are in any degree responsible for the filthy, waterless state of 'The Fountain'? Is *repression* all that this kind of man is fit for? Can he not at the same time do so very little as provide that thirsty citizens shall not be lured to a public fountain, only to be turned away disappointed and disgusted?

One expects that people who rail against beer, will have a good word to say for water. We have in our town abundance of excellent water. Why should it not be treated respectfully? Can we not afford to exhibit it to the people in a beautiful and attractive form? The 'Whitelaw' fountain ought to be regarded as a shrine, which holds and gives forth for human need one of God's most delightful gifts—the cup of cold water. The other day I dragged up one of the cups of this fountain from its basin, where it had long lain hidden beneath a foul and blackened pool. Our fountains, so called, are all of them poor unsightly things. They have never done anything to make water-drinking attractive; they have not even made it safe. Is it in despair of better things that our authorities have now deprived them of water? The 'Whitelaw' fountain might, with a little alteration, be made, for the summer months at least, to fling up a stream of bright pure water, besides giving the best of drinks

to thirsty men. The 'Janet Hamilton' fountain might be similarly treated. Those lesser 'fountains,' which bear the ironical legend, 'Government for the people,' etc., etc., will never be anything else than emblazoned hypocrisies. They have no beauty in themselves, and when they have no water they merely insult the passer-by. One thing I should greatly desire to move the party of *repression* to do, and that is to put water before the people in a reverential manner, and to cease henceforth from profaning in public this great gift of God.

THE BOY AND THE 'WASTE' PLACES

> 'There were some that ran and some that leapt
> Like troutlets in a pool.'
>
> —*The Dream of Eugene Aram.*

The 'waste' ground is the bit of a line of street which, as yet, is not built upon. The boy does not know that some very wise people have incomprehensible views about those bits of 'waste' land. I shall not seek to enlighten the boy regarding those views of sapient reformers. I shall content myself with heartily congratulating the boy that such 'waste' places exist. The boy does not speak of them as 'waste' places. They are the places he loves best in all the town—public parks included.

The boy causes those 'waste' places to blossom like the rose, by filling them with the uproar and joy of his young life. Alexander Street, Ronald Street, W. George Street, not to mention many other streets, have in them considerable bits of 'waste' land. They are the brightest and liveliest and happiest bits of the town. Sometimes one finds oneself thinking about those 'waste' lands and their noisy and happy possessors. One is made to think of them in winter by the visit of the authorised deputation from the, as yet, unformed football club; and in summer by similar deputations from cricket clubs which are confident of coming into being.

It is pleasant to think of those boys and their aspirations. One wonders how that particular set of boys got together; by what principle they will cohere; how they came to select their treasurer; what proofs he had already given of integrity and of business capacity; how the captain is chosen; where that important meeting was held at which the great decision was come to, that such and such a boy was to be captain; where their cricket pitch was to be made, or their goals set up; what bit of 'waste' land they intended to claim and to hold? One allows oneself to think of the innumerable clubs which those boys bring into existence, and of their ephemeral nature. What becomes of their assets?

Where are the bats and balls and wickets of past seasons? When the club breaks up is there an impartial division of assets among the members? Is there ever a dishonest treasurer? Does actual bankruptcy ever dissolve those youthful associations? What place have fraud and violence in the affairs of those little men of the world? How is possession of the bit of 'waste' land determined among them? Is it by right or by might? This only I know, that they can be very happy, and the 'waste' places love them, and they love the 'waste' places. There are to-day many Coatbridge men in far-off lands whose happiest memories of the Iron Burgh are associated with those 'waste' places. Therefore—the land-values faddists notwithstanding—I say, Long live the bits of 'waste' land in our town!

THE CITY AND ITS PEOPLE

Rev. xxi.

I

Only a small minority of the inhabitants of Coatbridge have occasion to climb Zion Hill by way of North Church Street, or Muiryhall Street upwards to Coats Church, and of that small minority only

a few give any heed to the crop of loose stones which seems to grow there, just as though it were the natural harvest of which our method of road-making is the sowing. Let it be gratefully admitted that there is some evidence that loose stones are occasionally gathered and removed. Yet do they reappear day after day, as abundant as before.

Our City Fathers do not sufficiently consider that these loose stones constitute a serious physical danger, and likewise a moral danger. They are a physical danger to the cyclist, and to the horse in cart or carriage. They are, moreover, a source of moral danger to the boy. The abundance of these loose stones throughout the burgh is directly contributing to create and cherish that undesirable kind of boy—the stone-throwing boy. Sometimes it is a schoolmate whom he assails in this way. The Alexander Hospital, small as it is, has, to my certain knowledge, treated quite a number of boys and girls, who are now maimed for life by a blow from a stone, thrown at them by a schoolmate. Sometimes it is a pigeon or a sparrow that is pelted. Sometimes it is a dog or a cat. Sometimes, when animated targets are wanting, it is a door or a window. The missiles being generously supplied by the City Fathers, the boys naturally avail themselves of them, and acquire the cruel and cowardly habit of striking from a safe distance and then

running away. The physical danger from stone-throwing is very considerable, but the moral danger is even greater. It begets and breeds a base habit in boys. Boys should be taught to settle their little differences at close quarters, and without the aid of more dangerous weapons than their hands. What shall we think of a Board School boy who throws a stone at a girl? And how shall you succeed in training a boy to a kindly feeling towards innocent and defenceless birds and beasts while you continue to suggest cruelty to his heedlessness, by littering his road to and from school with loose stones?

II

There ought not to be a single loose stone lying about the streets of a well-regulated burgh. If the City Fathers cannot cease from sowing for a perennial crop of loose stones by discontinuing the mud age system of road making, they should enforce the daily gathering and removing of the stones. Something might be said in this connection about road patching, that highly useful art which we have certainly not lost, having never acquired it. Broken up pieces of the road are left to lie covered with big loose stones, until the revolving year brings again the hired steam roller upon the scene. Strange that some people do not see the moral suggestive-

ness of a badly kept road! Quite likely the same people fail to see the moral symbolism of a sewage-laden canal with its floating humps of carrion, each gas-inflated hump representing, most likely, a cruel deed done by man or boy. If the money which has been spent upon litigation in the water question, and the drainage question, and the Coat-hill Hospital inquiry, had been available for town improvement, we might have had before our eyes, in parks and roads and other features of the town, so strong a suggestion of order, and even beauty, that we should insensibly have been striving to live up to it. When St. John saw in vision that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, with its jasper walls, its gates of pearl, its streets of pure gold, and the river, clear as crystal, flowing through it, he discerned at once that such a city would be sure to have a suitable citizenship. 'There shall in no wise,' he says, 'enter into it any thing unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie.' Our town is the material expression of ourselves. Taken conjointly, we are unable for the present to express ourselves in anything better. Town improvement waits upon our self-improvement. And that is why every improvement in the town deserves so high a commendation, and so warm a welcome.

PROBLEMS OF PROGRESS

PREJUDICE—A DEFINITION, AND AN ILLUSTRATION

The definition is new. The illustration is old; certainly as old as my acquaintance with the two study windows of Gartsherrie Manse. The hero, in a recent book, sets himself to discover the causes of human dissension in order to find a remedy for Prejudice—'the common incapacity of the human mind to understand that a difference in one respect is not a difference in all respects, reinforced and rendered malignant by an instinctive hostility to what is unlike ourselves.' In the same connection Prejudice is spoken of as 'the last and terrible limitation of the soul of mankind.' We are so satisfied that we are reasonable beings, that we scarcely notice that it is only very occasionally that we are free to judge or to act reasonably.

And now as to the illustration of Prejudice. There are two windows to the study in this manse. One looks towards the south, the other towards the east. The south window is filled with glass of so poor a quality that no single pane is 'true' glass. The window towards the east is mostly 'true' glass. You will realise what that means to the eyes that

look out of those windows. That which I look at through the east window I see as it really is. For if I slip outside the house I can discover no difference between what I was looking at through the window and what I see without the intervention of the glass. It is quite different with the south window. It looks upon the Wesleyan Chapel. No words can describe the appearance of that structure as seen through the south window of Gartsherrie Manse. Through one pane it looks as though a bomb had broken the ridge of the roof, and made a vast chasm into which the shattered slates are constantly running. Through another pane every thing is comically distorted. The ornamental cross is made to look like a huge cabbage, much twisted, and about to break in the middle. The chimney-cans, through yet another pane, appear to be of many sizes, from a few inches above the roof to as many yards in height, and are in all sorts of attitudes. A pigeon on the roof appears like a stork. Workmen are frequently busy upon the roof of the Chapel. I almost wonder at it ; for, as seen through the south window, the whole building appears twisted and broken, and beyond the possibility of being repaired. If I could only see this building from the east window I should see it as it really is. But I cannot. Then there is a chime of bells. I hear them through the south window. They sound old and decrepit and sad. It

seems to cost them much pain to give forth their sounds. Or, is it that they know they are dreadfully out of tune? Then I remember that I am hearing them through the falsifying medium of the south window. How different might they not sound if I heard them through the window with the true glass that looks towards the east?

So does prejudice limit the soul of mankind, as though it saw and heard only through the south window. What is it to call ourselves rational creatures if the windows of our souls are filled with glass which represents men as 'trees walking'? Through what kind of glass do the nations of the world look at each other? It is long since Reason won her first victory over the brutishness of the prehistoric ages; but she still suffers many defeats.

THE POINT OF VIEW

'A strong Nor'wester's blowing, Bill.
Hark! don't you hear it roar now?
Lord help 'em, how I pities them
Unhappy folks on shore now.
My eyes! what tiles and chimney-pots
About their heads are flying.'

WILLIAM PITT, *The Sailor's Consolation.*

You like those lines from 'The Sailor's Consolation.' But why do you like them? It is because

they reveal a reciprocity of feeling between the sea-going portion of our population and the landsmen. When the strong Norwester's blowing we landsmen think of the sailor; and the sailor thinks of us; each from his own point of view. An unpleasant feature of our present day discontent, is the absence of reciprocal feeling. We are not made aware of each other's 'consolations.' Each class or section of the people would have us believe that they have a monopoly of distress. Whether we are placed one against the other, as rich and poor, or as labourists and capitalists, or as landowners and landless ones, there is little inclination to discover and recognise the difficulties and trials which inseparably belong to the situation of each. But in reality each and every class *has* its special and peculiar troubles, anxieties and worries. In whose interest is this fact denied or suppressed? My answer is, that we are gradually allowing ourselves to adopt the politician's view of the conditions under which we live. It serves the politician's purpose to exaggerate the wrongs, or the wrongdoings of a particular class. It is not his business to say to people, 'We have each our faults and our difficulties: yours may be different from mine, but mine are just as real, and just as hard to combat as yours. And we have each our 'consolations.' There is always something which helps

a man to be reconciled to his lot. Every man by his special circumstances is delivered from some trouble which vexes his neighbour.'

The contest which is proceeding around us is between the political and the religious view of life. And the most mischievous persons are the religious teachers who themselves adopt the political view of life. We are far from perfect success in inducing the world to accept the religious view of life. Nevertheless, those who have accepted it are the 'salt of the earth' and the 'light of the world.' The modifying influence which is working amid all our unrest and selfish clamour, proceeds directly from the many who do not accept the politician's view of life, and who do not believe that any one class has a monopoly of sorrow or joy, of good or evil, of vice or virtue, but that these things are wonderfully intermixed, and as wonderfully distributed.

'WEED-KILLERS'

'But He said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.'—Matt. xiii. 29.

I

It is the habit of some people to speak very disrespectfully of what they call 'weeds,' as though these were the flagrant vices of vegetation. And it

is also a habit with some people to declaim fiercely against certain customs and usages of their fellow-creatures as though these were the noxious 'weeds' of our otherwise flawless human nature. Both these types of men are exceedingly partial to the use of the 'Weed-killer.' Innumerable are the advertised 'Weed-killers' suitable for the destruction of objectionable plant life. Persecution pure and simple, or coercive legislation, which is its modern equivalent, are the 'Weed-killers' which some people are constantly endeavouring to apply to the human being. No one need doubt that the 'Weed-killer' for gardens is well named. There is no fraud about it. Any of the chemical mixtures sold as 'Weed-killers' will kill every weed which torments the flower-grower. It is not so certain, however, that the habits of a free people, such as the use of beer and tobacco, can be destroyed either by persecution or by repressive legislation. Peter the Great imposed the penalty of death upon the smoker of his day; but the habit spread beyond his power to stamp it out. The application of the 'Weed-killer' to the human being continues nevertheless to have many advocates. There are certain considerations common to the human being and to vegetable life which I am desirous that the favourer of either or of both kinds of 'Weed-killer,' should be induced to ponder.

I shall take plant life first. All our flowers were once weeds. It is important to know that, and to remember it. Even the priceless orchid is a weed in the climes from which we bring it. The different kinds of grain which feed the world were once upon a time wild grasses. The true ancestors of the rose and of the geranium are still growing abundantly in many districts of the country, though ignorance will fail to recognise them as such. Why then should any man hate weeds, seeing that by careful cultivation they can become beautiful flowers? Had the deadly 'Weed-killer' been in use in the world from time immemorial, we should never have possessed those plants whose foliage and bloom are the ornament and joy of our gardens and homes.

Another consideration: weeds being undeveloped forms of vegetable life tend to remain undeveloped, chiefly through the poverty of the soil in which they are struggling to exist. It is in consequence comparatively easy to get rid of weeds in rich and well cultivated ground. Wretchedly poor ground will never grow anything but weeds. The application of the 'Weed-killer' to poor soil would be a senseless operation. If you wish to clear a lawn of weeds it is wise to enrich it first of all, and then take out the weeds by hand. The 'Weed-killer' unless most skilfuly applied, will destroy both grass and weeds. The only places on which it is absolutely safe to use

the 'Weed-killer' are wheresoever you desire that nothing shall grow. You may safely apply the 'Weed-killer' to your walks. In any other places it is dangerous.

II

Let us think now of the human being; and let us think of the 'Weed-killers' of persecution and coercive laws, which some people believe have made the civilised man what he is. The remote forefathers of us all were savages, whose boasted attributes were bloodshed, cruelty, drunkenness, and gluttony. Does the use of the 'Weed-killer' explain the present day civilised man? I answer without hesitation, 'No more than its use explains the emergence and survival of our best trees and plants.' Gradual cultivation has been the chief agent by which human nature has been led forth from a baser state. Human nature has, be it noted, some advantages over vegetable life in the movement towards betterness. Man has had from the start some reason at least, and some moral sense. You cannot induce a weed to leave your flower-plot, but a man may be induced to mend his ways. You cannot shame a weed into any higher or more acceptable form of vegetable life, even though you were to surround it with growing things of use and beauty. But man yields in time to what he feels to

be superior to himself. Man is so constituted that he cannot altogether resist the uplift of good example. The 'Weed-killer' method of treating his habits, whether innocent or faulty, invariably irritates him, and hardens him.

Man would have been better to-day if the 'Weed-killer' had never been tried upon him. But, chiefly, man retains his vices because he is still very poorly nourished, especially in mind and soul and spirit. Many men and women are so poorly nourished in these respects that the wonder is that they have any virtues at all. What these want is not the 'Weed-killer' but some methods of more generous enrichment. This kind of treatment costs money, and it requires skill and patience. The 'Weed-killer' is cheaper, and any fool can apply it. Alas! for the fine things that have invariably perished out of men's souls, whensoever, in order to improve them, forsooth, their liberty has been taken away! If truth must be told, few of us have the qualities which alone could justify us in using the 'Weed-killer' upon our fellow-citizens. Those who cry loudest for it are generally those who have had to apply it to themselves, for their own salvation. There are cases in which the 'Weed-killer' alone can save. But that does not prove that it is suitable for general application.

THE PHYSICIAN OF THE FUTURE

'Bless the Lord, Who healeth all thy diseases.'—Ps. ciii.

I CONFESS to a painful disappointment with the medical side of the Insurance Act. I was looking forward to the gradual increase among the working classes of the desire for a family doctor, a man who would know the family, and being interested in them, would give of his best in cases of illness. There was, I believe, a movement towards this best of all possible arrangements; but now it is thrust back for a generation at least. It is even possible that the panel system, if persisted in, will so unfavourably affect the status of the medical profession, that it may be many years before it will be reinstated in the confidence and affection of the general public. One thing seems certain: the type of doctor which the panel system will eventually evolve is not likely to be the physician of the future. The older type of doctor had at least some affinity with the spiritual, and was therefore in process of becoming, in time, a competent helper of his afflicted fellow-creature. The doctor of the more immediate future will lean emphatically towards materialism, and he will find himself opposed by the spiritual healers, who will only too successfully teach many, of all classes, to withhold their confidence from the men of the

drug and the knife. Had the medical profession been left alone to develop naturally, it would have been able to absorb into itself the enormous reinforcement which faith and mental suggestion are able to bring to the aid of purely medical and surgical ministration. As it is, we are about to be confronted with two conflicting methods of cure, the exponents of which are prepared to ridicule and revile one another.

We want the complete physician. The faith-healer is not, and cannot be, the complete physician. He must be brought to recognise his limitations. The materialistic doctor is not, and cannot be, the complete physician. He must come to acknowledge that there is a spiritual and mental side to much of the disease which afflicts humanity, and that spiritual and mental ministration is not without its good effect upon all kinds of bodily suffering. We require to be reminded that the doctor is but a rib taken from the primitive man. So is the minister of religion. The spiritual and the material are therefore not originally opposites. It is only the narrowness of ignorance, or the bigotry of professionalism, which hinders a hearty and intelligent co-operation between ministers of religion and members of the medical faculty in the treatment of disease. By this time it should be known to all enlightened people that division of labour, which

produces the professions and the innumerable trades, is merely an arrangement for improving the various parts of the whole man. There ought not to be any unreasonable conflict between these parts of the whole man. Each part ought to be perfecting itself, with the intention of thereby benefiting the whole man. The misfortune is, that division of labour, as we see, is effecting the creation of separate and antagonistic types of men ; nor have we sufficient loyalty to the interests of the whole man to prevent it. Each part of the primitive man is becoming itself a man, who wars against the other parts, which are themselves likewise men. It is a case for re-union ; and it is more clamant than the need for reunion of churches.

To bring those widely severed and warring parts of man into unity we shall require the renewed sense of God, as the source and centre of life and well-being. The medical profession and the faith-healer would find a basis for union and co-operation if both were frankly to admit that ' Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but it is God who giveth the increase.' In other words, it is neither the doctors nor the faith healers who effect cures. Healing is of God. All that man can do, whether he be a faith-healer or a doctor of medicine, is to remove obstructions which are opposing the free inflow of the energy of life, which is of God. The

physician of the future is still in the making. He will be a man of science, and he will be a man of faith.

THE SCIENCE OF APPLIED SALVATION

'Bless the Lord, Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction.'—Ps. ciii.

We have seen that one of the principal problems of progress is how to produce the complete physician of the body. But an even deeper problem is that connected with the treatment and cure of soul disease. Nor can we impress upon ourselves too strongly that here, too, faith and science are alike essential for such as seek to repair the ravages of sin.

Of faith in this department of remedial activity there ought to be no lack amongst the followers of the Good Physician. Nay, is it not the chief characteristic of the Christian Church that in spite of all appearances to the contrary, it still believes in the human race? The truth is that the day in which it ceases to have infinite hope for human beings it will cease to be. 'Redeemed humanity' is the one vision which refreshes its weary outlook—the one splendour which arises above a blood-soaked earth. And our confidence is nourished upon the consciousness that even now the human race is in

process of being saved: that the Jesus love will never let us go, no, not even the worst of us.

What do we think and what do our churches think of that ancient belief that Jesus 'went and preached to the spirits in prison?' Is this not an incitement to all believers to descend to our social hells, holding it possible that by Him we can 'save to the uttermost?' We waste a tremendous amount of time and energy in pasturing and folding the fat and heavy-fleeced sheep. Yet, strange to say, it is from *them* that the cry comes that they are neglected. This land, nay, even this town of ours has in it all the limbs and organs of a mighty moral and social saviour, but they have never been put together. Is there not a 'fitter' anywhere amongst us, who will undertake the job? The moral and social physician has the majority of his patients among those who 'are whole and need no physician.' When shall we set ourselves in real earnest the duty of tending the 'sick'? When shall we in fullest faith stand at the sepulchres of social corruption and call upon the dead to stand forth?

That vision, far off now, of Jesus bringing forth into new and worthy doing, souls given up as 'dead in trespasses and sins' has always stirred the human heart to a measure at least of emulation. All down the centuries there are a few shining names of devoted lovers of humanity who have wrought

wonders upon the derelicts of society. But indeed this kind of work has always characterised the Church of Christ, and our own country has not been without its share of such wonder workers. It is only since the Reformation, which destroyed the ancient charitable institutions, that we have had the spectacle of churches which had no distinctive representation in the sphere of social amelioration. As a people, we clung until quite recently to that 'short and easy method' with transgressors which was embodied in the prison and the gallows. It is not a hundred years since two lads were hanged in Glasgow for stealing eighteenpence.

That hundred years has not been long enough for more than the partial evolution of the science of applied salvation. The idea is even yet much combated that any further use can be made of human *scrap*. It is still thought by many that the 'furnace' is not here which alone can deal with such material. Meanwhile it is beyond all dispute that some of the greatest sinners have 'returned,' that quite a number of the 'lost' have been recovered, and that even some of the 'dead' have been restored to life again.

The question is: Have we enough experience of the kind upon which to found a science of applied salvation? I believe we have. The Church of Scotland has begun to believe that we have, and this belief is being steadily nourished by the experiences provided

by her schemes of social work and cognate redemptive agencies. Let that science once be fairly disclosed to us in its grounds, its hopes, its methods, and its results; we shall then be looking upon the greatest of all sciences, and we shall have poured fresh and richer meanings into the ancient words: 'Bless the Lord, Who forgiveth all thine iniquities . . . Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.'

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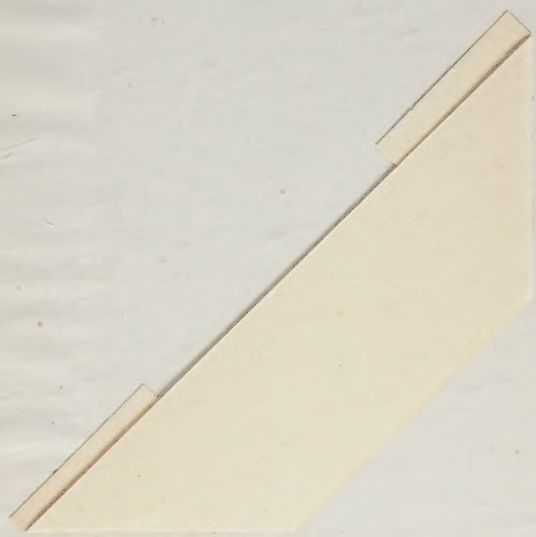

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